

# Resources

*Raze The Walls*, a Seattle-based anti-prison group lost its home, its computer, files and numerous letters when fire destroyed the squat they were in. They are attempting to replace the material lost in the process along with their personal lives. They hope to finish this long and complicated process by August 15th, 1995. Until then, they will not be able to respond to past or future mail. The loss includes any stamps or money sent to them, along with their computer files so they really have to start from the beginning. If you can help at all, please write to:

Raze The Walls  
P.O. Box 22774  
Seattle WA 98122-0774  
202-328-8571

Muslim prisoners would like to hear from society free Muslims (Sunni) around the country who can relate to what it's like to be incarcerated and what practices they have been denied. Those who are assisting the oppressed American Muslim or would like to with letters seeking the true understanding of Islam, or a pen-pal should contact.

Tijae A.Y. Kato #58650  
Lock Bag R  
Rahway NJ 07065

The address for the *Prisoners' Action Committee* in Birmingham that was published in the last issue is no longer valid. The new address is:

Marvin May  
c/o Prisoners' Action Committee  
420-62nd Street North  
Birmingham AL 35212

*Vita Pro* is the name of a Canadian company supplying an inedible meat substitute to Texas prisons. If you have any information on this company or its products please write to:

Simon Smallwood #552407  
Ellis 1 Unit  
Huntsville TX 77343

A booklet called, *The Mackenzie Institute for the Study of Terrorism, Revolution and Propaganda - Exposed* is a history and critical examination of the ideas and influence of the MacKenzie institute, a paranoid and right-wing think tank based in Toronto. Given the increasing political polarization happening in Canada these days, this is a good way to

meet one of the key ideological enemies. Available for \$3. from:  
*Marginal Distribution*  
277 George St. N. Unit 103  
Peterborough On K9J 3G9  
705-745-2326

The *Prison Law Project of the National Lawyers Guild* is very busy these days. The recent election of jailhouse lawyers to the National Steering Committee of the Prison Law Project certainly is a political advance for prison organizing but that is only part of what they do. Subs for their *Legal Journal* are \$7.50/yr. Jailhouse lawyers can join the Lawyers Guild for free, - there are now over 700 such members - but they need whatever donations you can send. Dues to the Prison Law Project are \$10-\$40 per year which include the *Legal Journal*. Help support this critically important project. Write:

Prison Law Project  
National Lawyers Guild  
558 Capp St.  
San Francisco CA 94110

The *Prisoner's Resource Committee* can help prisoners in New Jersey with parole plans, information about resources, do advocacy work, and assist you in human and civil rights claims. Once out, they will continue to offer support and counselling with employment, welfare, substance abuse, etc. Write to:  
*Prisoner's Resource Center*  
6th Flr, 972 Broad St.  
Newark NJ 07102

*Florida Prison Legal Perspectives*, volume 1, issue 4 covers various legal issues around prison visitation. Though intended for Florida prisoners in particular, it would be of interest to anyone with a legal bent on such issues. Subs are \$4./yr for prisoners, \$8./ for non-prisoners: Write:  
*Florida Prison Legal Perspectives*  
P.O. Box 660-387  
Chuluota FL 32766

*Vietnam Vets*, including women who worked medical, I am composing a novel and invite you to share your Nam experience with me. I wish to utilize the nightmares you were subjected to during those hellish days as background information. Please make a copy of what you send, and indicate whether you are giving me permission to use your writing in whole or in part. Please send your material to:  
William L. Hayes #175895  
1576 W. Bluewater Highway  
Ionia MI 48846

## Upcoming events - Toronto

The following is a summary of planned events referred to in the letter to all prisoners, page 4.

In Peterborough on Saturday July 8th, activists will meet for the Prisoner Support Network Regional Conference. It will consist of workshops and discussion about current projects and objectives. Invitations have been sent to activists but anyone interested can attend. Contact:

ACAA, Box 25, 197 Hunter St. W.  
Peterborough, ON K9H 2L1

Through The Walls is the Prisoners' Solidarity & Anti-prison Conference being organized by Outbreak for the weekend of August 25th. It will consist of panel discussions, networking, workshops, skills-sharing and speakers. This international conference will host activist leaders from a variety of groups and initiatives. People who wish to attend should pre-register by July 30th. For more info, contact:

Outbreak  
P.O. Box 6326, Stn. A  
Toronto, ON M5W 1P7  
Voicemail: 416-631-3776

To raise awareness and support around the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Outbreak is planning several cultural events through July & August. One confirmed event will be a hard-core show at 360 Club, Queen St. West on August 13th. It will be open to all ages and feature performances by Sparkmaker and Blowhard. For more info, contact Outbreak (address above).

PASAN, Prisoners HIV/AIDS Support Action Network is organizing a national workshop on HIV/AIDS in prisons. The focus will be to hear from prisoners attending on day passes, about related issues, workshops, discussion and interaction between activists, health-care workers and policy-makers. Anyone wishing to attend, or for more info, contact: Leslie Gaynor @ PASAN (416) 920-9567.

The Prisoners' Justice Day Committee has met a number of times and they will organize a 24 hour vigil at Toronto City Hall. As well as a Sunrise Ceremony and candle-light vigil, there will be speakers, a press conference and more. To receive the PJD Bulletin for updates or more info, contact  
PJD Committee c/o  
A Space, 183 Bathurst St.  
Toronto, ON M5T 2R7

# PRISON NEWS SERVICE

a bulldozer publication

MAY/JUNE 1995  
NUMBER 51



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# Political Murder

ON DECEMBER 6TH, I lost a friend – killed by police on the streets of Kansas City. He was Black, 38, born in Chicago and moved to Birmingham, Alabama at age 14. Other than the spirit of Cinque in his heart there was no advance notice of his death. It's taken me 4 months to connect with someone in Kansas City that can help me find out why Mike Turner died so violently and what happened with his body.

ALSO IN DECEMBER, a young Dominican man was beaten and choked to death by police officers in the Bronx. Anthony Baez succumbed to the blue terror while his family and friends looked on in horror.

FEBRUARY, IN PATTERSON, New Jersey an unarmed 16-year-old manchild – Lawrence Myers – had his brains blown out by a housing project cop working for federal dollars. The shooter was white. The victim was Black.

THE ONLY WARNING any of them got was color and class. The list is endless.

FOR MUMIA ABU-JAMAL there was an additional warning. The state has proclaimed loud and clear its intention to kill him. The state is backed in its warning by the Philadelphia Police Department, judicial compliance, and a sickening apathy on the part of too many people.

WHAT THE FACTS DEMONSTRATE is that Mumia was beaten and shot by Philadelphia police in a city notorious for police murders and brutality. They show that Mumia's trial was fundamentally unfair and that he was framed by a hanging judge. The fact is this system places no human value of Mumia's life but does place symbolic value on killing a principled and courageous defender of the Black Nation. Mumia has been made a target of opportunity in a political climate rancid with racism and reaction.

IT'S OFTEN SAID that it is better to light a single candle than to curse the darkness. That's fine as far as it goes but it is presently not deep or strong enough to deter the States executioners. We are at a point beyond candle vigils that reflect little besides moral indignation. We are beyond the point of

watching and staring in disbelief.

PROTEST MUST CONTINUE and increase, but it is the fire of resistance that must be ignited. And I don't mean the path of least resistance. I mean resistance that fires from the heart rather than a sense of obligation. I mean sacrifices that compensate in some meaningful way for the shameful indifference that afflicts so many that should be supporting Mumia. Political murder grants nothing to moderation.

WE LIVE IN A COUNTRY that passed a "crime bill" imposing the death penalty for 50 new offenses at the same time a national day of mourning was declared for a war criminal like Richard Nixon. We all bear some degree of responsibility for this American nightmare. We are all responsible to rectify it.

THE LAW FUNCTIONS as an ethical sanction of state violence. It's the government's trump card; the corporate ace in the hole. Cops kill us with impunity and we are hurled into the world's largest prison system while the quality of life gets pulled from under us by King Capitalism. Those the rule have the law and most of the guns on their side.

## ...political murder grants nothing to moderation...

MUMIA'S LIFEBLOOD and political activism have roots in the Middle Passage and Black bondage. The law has its own bloody roots in supporting genocide, slavery, racism and the penitentiary system. The use and abuse of the law from the patrol car to the Supreme Court only adds to the debilitating effects of lives rubbed raw by oppression – an oppression Mumia has resisted since his formative years with the Black Panther Party.

TO RESPECT AND DEFEND Mumia is to act.

THE FALL, 1994 ISSUE of the National Lawyers Guild "Guild Notes" does not contain a single mention of Mumia Abu-Jamal. This is not a good example of raising consciousness, testing the bounds of legality, or defiance in the face of death. More must be done.

I'M REMINDED OF IDA B. WELLS and her hard-fought campaign against lynching. Throughout her many years of activism she was dismayed with the large number of professionals who put their positions and comforts over the needs of a community under attack. And for the uninitiated let me add that Ida B. Wells possessed a big pistol which she acquired after seeing enough men lynched to know that bitter fruit is most often Black, and the system attacks the most vulnerable.

IT IS MY VIEW THAT the rights due us by virtue of our humanity and labor are continuously violated, and that no comprehensive relief or solutions lie with the courts. However, this is not to say that battles cannot be won through the law. For this reason, every avenue of the law should be pursued to save the life of Mumia and others. What I am saying is that it may not be enough, and for THAT reason other avenues need to be utilized in local, national, and international efforts to stop this execution.

WE NEED TO GO BEYOND the merely acceptable to another level of energy, commitment and possibilities. Every neighborhood, every workplace, union, church, mosque, NAACP chapter, Leonard Peltier Defense Committee – every National Lawyers Guild member – needs to get down in a serious way with this campaign. No one should claim immunity or prior commitments: it's going to take sweat and maybe pain. It's going to take a big noise and maybe confrontation. This is a commitment that requires whatever it takes for as long as it takes.

April, 1995

Raymond Luc Levasseur  
10376/016 Box 8500, ADX  
Florence, CO 81226-8500

**As we go to press, PA Gov. Ridge has signed Mumia's death warrant and execution is set for August 17, 1995. NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT!**

Pennsylvania Governor Thomas Ridge signed the death warrant for celebrated death row journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal on June 1, setting his execution date for August 17.

As planned before his warrant was signed, Abu-Jamal's legal team – headed by renowned defense attorney Leonard Weinglass – will file his Post-Conviction Review Appeal (PCRA) on Monday, June 5, at Philadelphia's City Hall. The documents to be filed along with the PCRA include a Motion for Recusal of Common Pleas Court Judge Albert Sabo, a Motion for Discovery for items never turned over at the first trial and a Protective Order to thwart police intimidation of witnesses. Equal Justice USA and International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal are backing up the Motion for Recusal with a national campaign to keep Sabo off the case and spotlight Philadelphia's wanton use of the death penalty. Sabo could decide to hear Mumia's PCRA, literally serving as the judge of his own bias. Sabo has sentenced more people to death than any other judge in the country (31 total) – all of but two of whom are people of color. Abu-Jamal emphasized in a recorded statement today: "The most distinguished lawyers in Philadelphia ... say in sworn papers that ... no defendant can get a fair hearing in front of him (Sabo)." "Ridge's signing of Mumia's warrant demonstrates the moral bankruptcy of the death penalty in Pennsylvania," said Equal Justice USA Coordinator Jane Henderson. "It was public knowledge that Mumia's legal team planned to file his appeal for a new trial on Monday, moving the case to the next level. The Governor is pandering to police special interests." The Patriot News in Harrisburg reported yesterday that Abu-Jamal would final his PCRA on Monday, June 5. Organizers of the mushrooming national campaign in support of Abu-Jamal are activating their constituencies and escalating the effort to gain a new trial. Local Philadelphia activists are planning a large public reading in the city of Live From Death Row, Mumia's book of essays recently released by Addison-Wesley, on July 3 – the 13th anniversary of his conviction. Through his radio commentaries and Live From Death Row, prison journalist Abu-Jamal brings a keen, articulate and human dimension to the debate around the death penalty and the overall legal system. In recent weeks, Live From Death Row has been featured on Entertainment Tonight, CBS Evening News, Hard Copy and in the Washington Post and the New York Post. Detailed information about the case, photos, audio and video available from contacts:

Pam Africa 215-476-8812 Phone/Fax  
International Concerned Friends and Family of Mumia Abu-Jamal  
Box 19709  
Philadelphia, PA 19143

Equal Justice USA  
Ph. 301-699-0042, Fax 301-864-2182

### LIVE FROM DEATH ROW

Mumia's book, *Live From Death Row*, is available from the publisher:

Addison-Wesley  
170 - 5th. Ave  
New York, NY 10010

On the outside: the book should be available at your local bookseller, if not, ask for it! And not just one copy – tell them that the book is selling well!

# ABOLISH THE RACIST DEATH PENALTY FREE MUMIA!!!

## DEMAND A STAY OF EXECUTION AND A NEW TRIAL:

Gov. Ridge (717) 787-2500 or (717) 783-1198 voice  
(717) 787-3369 or (717) 783-1936 fax

Write: Governor Tom Ridge  
Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17130

## DEMAND THAT JUDGE SABO BE REMOVED FROM CASE:

Judge Alex Bonavita (215) 686-3770 voice  
(215) 576-7328 fax  
Judge Legrome Davis (215) 686-9534 voice  
(215) 686-2865 fax





# Support Khalfani Khaldun

We are a small group of concerned family members and friends who have come together with the purpose of exposing a conspiracy by the Indiana State Prison system against our friend and brother Khalfani Khaldun, aka Leonard McQuay. The prison system has made a number of attempts to destory Khalfani due to his revolutionary beliefs and spiritual beliefs and his struggle in the prison against racism and brutality.

Several years ago, Khalfani was confronted by a racist prison investigator, Karl Swihart, who wanted Khalfani to become a "prison snitch." Khalfani refused his proposals and ten days later some skinhead inmates torched Khalfani's cell with gas. All of his personal property – television, photographs, shoes – was completely destroyed. This was Swihart's way of telling Khalfani that he was dead. About ten days later, Khalfani was transferred out of the institution to the Indiana Reformatory in southern Indiana.

On June 30, 1989, Khalfani was sent back to Indiana State Prison in Michigan City and placed on their I.D.U. (Isolated Disciplinary Unit), and every time that Khalfani came up for release to general population Swihart accused him of being a "gang leader" to further harass and isolate Khalfani. Khalfani stayed in the segregation unit from 1989-1993 when he was released, along with six or seven New Afrikan brothers, to the prison's D-cell house (predator unit).

The only reason that Investigator Swihart agreed to the release of these prisoners was that this new unit was simply a larger segregation unit designed for "the

baddest of the bad." It was a very negative scene because the prisoners there were not allowed to be productive and many had developed backwards attitudes. Swihart was hoping that the prisoners would stew in their ignorance and either kill each other or be killed.

This plan backfired on him. Khalfani and ten other New Afrikan prisoners saw the need for Nation building and educational awareness. Political history classes were formed inside D-cell house. Khalfani had a great number of books and he organized a peoples' library for the sole purpose of educating the young New Afrikan men in D-cell house. This attracted a lot of attention from both prisoners and administration. Many young Black men became interested in the programs and a class was formed. On Fridays, the group would deal with self-esteem, self-determination, spirituality, math, reading and world politics. This group, led by Khalfani, was responsible for transforming the awareness of inmates in D-cell house, especially about the conditions they were living under. Some guys received GEDs before going home. Some men who didn't believe in God came to know the realness of prayer and God. It is this type of creativity and work that made Investigator Swihart target Khalfani.

Swihart continued to try to discredit Khalfani as a "Gary gang leader" and a "prison snitch," in order to curtail his effectiveness amongst the brothers he chose to help of his own free will.

Khalfani appreciates his new found knowledge and understanding and has

committed his life and soul to the liberation of New Afrikan people. He is fighting for his life at this moment and needs the support of the community to expose this setup by Karl Swihart.

On January 31, 1995, Khalfani was charged with the murder of a prison guard, an act which he did not commit. On December 13, 1994, several days after the execution of Ajamu Nassor (aka Gregory Resnover) at the Indiana State Prison, a guard was killed. The murder occurred in the predator D-cell house where Khalfani was housed. Investigator Swihart sent for Khalfani concerning the stabbing of this guard. Khalfani already knew that the possibility existed that he was being set up to take the murder rap, so he refused to say anything. Prison officials tried to tape record his voice in order to solidify their setup. When Khalfani refused to talk, Karl Swihart screamed at him saying, "I'm putting this one on you and it's gonna stick." Swihart ordered Khalfani transferred to the Maximum Control Complex at Westville, where he is confined alone in a cell behind a huge steel door for 23 hours a day and given only one hour of recreation.

Khalfani needs help for the outside and he feels sad about the lack of support for him and brothers like him due to lack of unity and communication on the behalf of New Afrikan people. Prior to this setup conspiracy, Khalfani was due to be released in two and one half years. Now his life is on the line and only with support of people from the community can he be saved. So We are asking you to join Us. Contribute what you can to his defense fund, or even send Brother Khalfani some encouraging words of support. Remember, tomorrow this could

be your own son, daughter, uncle, nephew, brother, whose life is on the line. We must act now. As long as We continue to live under this capitalist system of modern slavery and oppression, We will be fighting against its injustices, its racism and its murderous nature.

In struggling with this situation for Brother Khalfani, We not only help him, but also help ourselves to create the atmosphere of peoples' struggle, especially for people who have lost hope and believe that change is a lost cause. So We ask you to support in any way you can; it all counts, so Khalfani says. We need your collective support. Once We come together We are a force that can't be stopped. Stay strong and always remember, struggle is Our life whether we live in the down ghetto or the uptown neo-housing development. It's all a struggle. It's the oppressed against our present oppressor which is the system.

Gary People's Justice Committee for Brother Khalfani

Send tax-deductible donations to:  
*Sonora McQuay Khalfani Defense Fund P.O. Box 1513  
Gary, IN 46402*

Write:  
*Khalfani Khaldun  
(Leonard McQuay) #874304  
P.O. Box 557  
Westville, IN 46391-0557*

Note: Prison authorities have destroyed all of Khalfani's study materials, books, etc. If some of you can lend a hand by sending him some newspapers and/or political development materials, we will appreciate the assistance.

## Life-threatening medical "care" target of lawsuit

# Defend the lives of women in prison

On April 4, 1995, women incarcerated at two California prisons — Central California Women's Facility in Chowchilla and California Institution for Women at Frontera — filed suit against the State of California. They demand an immediate improvement to the life-threatening medical care given to all women prisoners in the state.

The following women are included in the suit:

- \* A woman with sickle cell anemia, heart problems, pulmonary hypertension and asthma whose medication and treatment is constantly being interrupted and delayed;
- \* A woman who was denied medication for blood clots in her legs and now needs to have her foot amputated;
- \* A woman with HIV who developed meningitis which was not diagnosed until she went into a coma;
- \* A woman who needs crutches or a cane in order to walk but who has been provided with neither;
- \* A 68-year-old woman with asthma and heart problems who was placed in a locked room for 12 hours without oxygen, medication or treatment.

The list goes on and on!

Over the last few years women have suffered painfully and some have died needlessly due to the state of California's total indifference to the medical needs of women prisoners.

Women whose first language is not English — primarily Chicanas/Mexicans — get even worse care because:

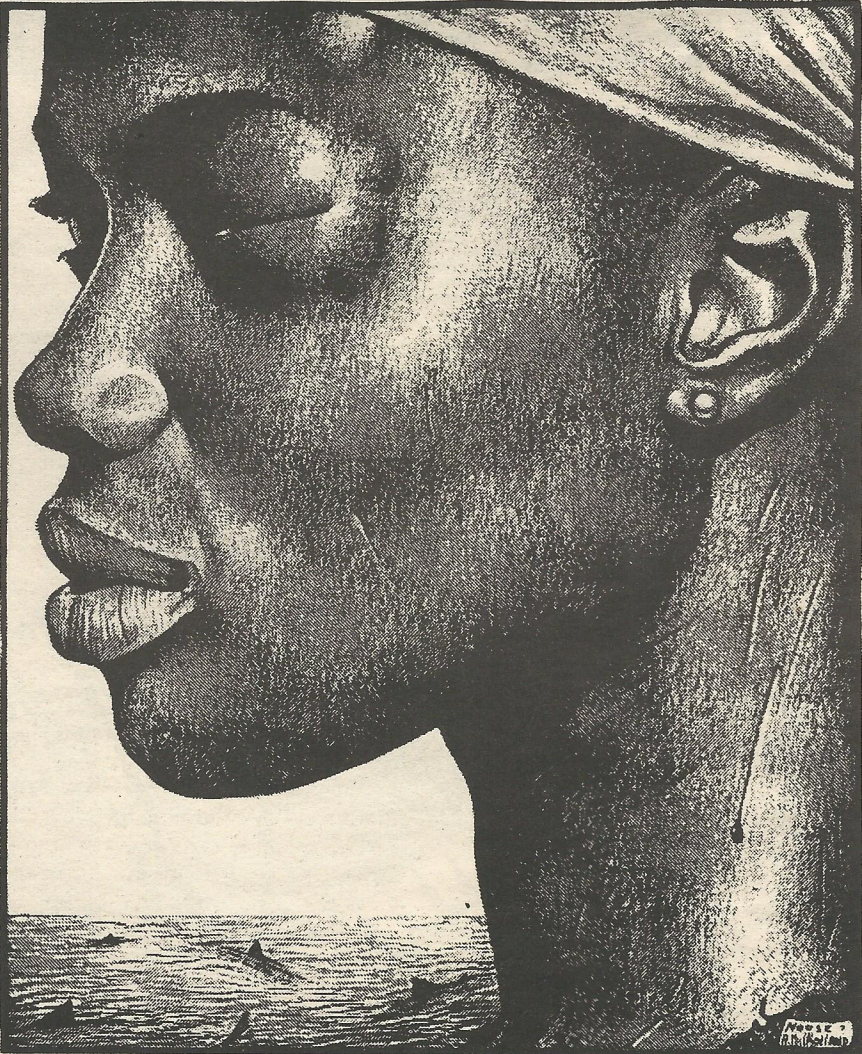
- \* There are few bilingual personnel who can be called on for medical emergencies and who can understand women's descriptions of symptoms and medical histories;

- \* Women have no confidentiality when non-medical personnel and/or other prisoners are asked to translate for them;
- \* Women are not properly informed of their diagnosis, nor are they provided instructions for the proper use of medication or provided appropriate follow-up treatment.

\* These factors result in a disproportionate number of preventable deaths among Latinas!

The California Coalition for Women Prisoners is a community organization which is outraged about the conditions that women prisoners face. Please join us to support their fight for adequate medical care. ∞

Write:  
*California Coalition for Women Prisoners  
474 Valencia Street, Suite 230  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
415/255-9383, Fax: 415/552-3150*



## Chowchilla retaliates against NLG Jailhouse Lawyer Marcia Bunney

On May 13th, National Lawyer Guild (NLG) Prison Law Project members Rose Braz and Marti Hiken visited NLG Jailhouse Lawyer Marcia Bunney, who is a named plaintiff in the class action law suit, Shumate v. Wilson (filed in early March of this year). In retaliation for her continued dedication to bettering women's conditions in prisons nationwide, she has been released from her position as law clerk at Chowchilla (Central California Women's Facility) as of May 19th. She also has also been threatened with a transfer to Valley State Prison (the newly-constructed women's prison built across the street from Chowchilla). Bunney has been at Chowchilla for nine years, and has been one of the two law clerks at Chowchilla serving 4,000 women prisoners. There is no question but that Bunney was fired and threatened with transfer due to her legal work on behalf of all women prisoners. She states that she will continue her work regardless of the retaliation. She is one of five Jailhouse Lawyers voted by her peers nationwide to represent NLG Jailhouse Lawyers on the NLG Prison Law Project National Steering Committee. Marcia is not one to be intimidated. She is also one of the most respected women Jailhouse Lawyers in the country. ∞

For information regarding Marcia's status, and to request that she be re-instated as Law Library Clerk, and that the retaliation against her be stopped, write:

*Teena Farmon  
Warden, CCWF  
PO Box 1501  
Chowchilla, CA 93610-1501*

Write to:  
*Marcia Bunney W 17194  
P.O. Box 1508 B507-08-04L  
Chowchilla CA 93610-1508*



# Pay phone scams target prisoners' families

Be informed that the Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) entered into a contract with AT&T Telephone Service to implement a prisoner collect-calling service based on a predetermined list of names no greater than 10 numbers. Unless Kansas prisoners submit such lists of 10, including attorneys and media, friends and relatives, Kansas prisoners will be denied telephone access with anyone outside prison. Any party agreeing to accept a collect phone call is an automatic target of a wiretap by the DOC and AT&T.

It is a crime under federal law for any person to wiretap or otherwise intercept a telephone call, unless that person has first obtained the consent of one of the parties actually participating in the call. Properly authorized law enforcement officers can engage in interceptions without the consent of either party when proceeding under court orders issued pursuant to applicable provisions of federal law. Under federal law, the penalty for illegal wiretapping can be imprisonment for five years, a \$10,000 fine or both (Source: federal law, United Telephone Co./Sprint Telephone Directory).

Unless the prisoner signs a form and completes a telephone call list mandated by the KDOC, the inmate will be denied access to call: 1. an attorney, 2. the media, 3. even their family in the event of an emergency or death. This aspect is frightening because AT&T records all phone calls and turns the recordings over to each prison warden and the DOC, who in turn target the inmate for "staff retaliation," for reporting such criminal activity by "staff," such as 1. smuggling narcotics into the prison system, 2. staff committing such crimes as: a. kidnapping children, b. rape of children, c. committing sodomy on children, and d. staff giving prisoners unrestricted access to very confidential information on private citizens.

The contract negotiated between AT&T and the KDOC provides for AT&T to bill

the user party, accepting a collect phone call, at a rate of from 20 percent to as much as 47 percent greater than an identical collect call made from Lansing, Kan., across the street opposite the prison complex, to the same location. The higher fees charged for the prisoner-originated collect call is then "kicked-back" to the DOC. In Louisiana, for example, AT&T and South Central Bell billed the end-user target \$7.9 million for one year's service and paid a "kickback" of \$2.75 million to the state (LDOC). An upstart company, Global Tel Link, Inc., outbid AT&T to contract the same service, but then implemented a significant cost increase of 37 percent to family (end) users, greater than the fee charged by AT&T.

The FTC has permitted telephone companies to make fraudulent overcharges to individuals who can least afford the fraud, to the extent in California that the state and its DOC will lose \$50 million when and should the fraudulent overcharge practice be terminated.

In Florida, the Miami-based People's Telephone Company (PTEL) operates more than 4,000 pay telephone lines in prison across the country. Each prison pay-phone line yields \$850 in revenues and a gross profit of \$150 per month. This is to be contrasted with \$300 monthly revenue and \$90 per month gross profit for PTEL's non-prison pay-phone lines. In 1993, PTEL's revenues for prison pay-phone lines alone were expected to exceed \$40,800,000 and gross profits to exceed \$7,200,000.

In the state of Washington, AT&T is the contract provider for long-distance phone service throughout the prison system and has subcontracted much of the service to three local exchange companies. AT&T pays the WDOC a 24 percent commission/kickback of billed revenues, while two of the locals pay 27 percent, and the third, 35 percent. Those who pay the phone bills are

clearly paying a surcharge (increased charge) to offset the contracted commission/kickback payments.

In North Carolina, the contract awarded to the North Carolina Coin Tel Company has been fraught with problems that resulted in grand-jury indictments. At issue is a \$1.2 million contract for the maintenance of prison pay phones. Indicted were D.R. Hursey, who directed all purchasing activities for the NCDoc, and a Michael A. Weaver, an account executive for AT&T and part owner in Coin Tel Inc. Weaver and Hursey charged prisoner's families (end users) \$88,971 for services never rendered.

Obviously, the situation in Kansas is one where the current administration in the governor's office is working to generate fraudulent kickbacks, through excessive revenue billing on long-distance telephone fees charged to families of prisoners, and on the backs of poor people who are least able to afford and support the fraud.

While the current governor may desire to be given a more kind place in history, the fact is that history may well record that "lame-duck" administration as one that committed atrocities, fraudulent kickback schemes against the poorest of poor people.

Mainstream media and companies such as United Telephone Co., Sprint and MCI should inform the general public that, should they or any business or attorneys accept a collect telephone call originating from a state prison in Kansas operated by the DOC; contracted between the KDOC, AT&T and Southwestern Bell, they not only shall be the subject of a wiretap, but the user-party accepting the call shall pay a telephone charge from at least 20 percent to more than 40 percent greater than for the same service charged non-prisoner collect calls.

Businesses, attorneys and companies using communication services furnished by either AT&T or Southwestern Bell should switch from those companies to either United Telephone Co./Sprint or MCI.

The public should be informed that the current administration of Kansas Gov. Finney is involved in a kickback scheme to

take money from poor families and little children. Poor little children do not deserve the fraud committed on them by the Kansas Department of Corrections and the administration of Gov. Joan Finney.

Thank you for assisting to inform the public of the fraud and illegal wiretap.

Jouett Arney

Published originally in December 1994 in the Hutchinson (Kansas) News.

Jouett Arney has been a good jailhouse lawyer since before most prisoners today were even born. He is currently involved in litigation against AT&T and Southwestern Bell regarding the unlawful costs' of prisoners' telephone communications. This is a major problem everywhere that prisoners, your families and your loved ones complain about, and now you can do something about it. Become a Plaintiff Intervenor in his lawsuit if you've got good standing. The prison industry needs to be exposed on a national level, because most people out here don't care about prisoners, but they care about money--and this is a good place to start. ∞

Jouett Arney #20538

P.O. Box 2

Lansing, KS 66043

Jouett Arney has been a good jailhouse lawyer since before most prisoners today were even born. He is currently involved in litigation against AT&T and Southwestern Bell regarding the unlawful costs of prisoners' telephone communications. This is a major problem everywhere that prisoners, your families and your loved ones complain about, and now you can do something about it. Become a Plaintiff Intervenor in his lawsuit if you've got standing. The prison industry needs to be exposed on a national level, because most people out here don't care about prisoners, but they care about money - and this is a good place to start. Contact: Jouette Arney at the address above.

# Eddie Hatcher freed after long campaign

On May 3, 1995, I was granted parole by the NC Parole Commission. I am on strict conditions including House Arrest, not allowed to go out of the county, and not to return to Robeson County.

The Commission said they paroled me because I have AIDS. In February I was diagnosed with full blown AIDS. Other than being somewhat weak and nauseated most of the time I am doing fairly well.

I know had it not been for the continuous work of my Mother I never would have been released. Also, I know many of you out there wrote many letters on my behalf, faxes and made telephone calls. And I truly appreciate all you did.

After a few weeks of adjustment I plan to go full force on several issues that are important to me including Political Prisoners in the United States, Norma Jean Croy case, AIDS issues and corruption within government.

Hopefully, in a few months I will be receiving some type of government assistance but until then if anyone would care to help me with money for postage, printing and so forth please do so. I can be reached at:

Hatcher Center for Human Rights  
120 Amber Road  
Hamlet, NC 28345  
910-582-8113 (telephone and fax).

Thanks,  
Eddie Hatcher

## Hatcher Center for Human Rights

*"Working to make life better for people of color, the poor and the sick"*

-Eddie Hatcher, Director

The Hatcher Center for Human Rights was founded by former Political Prisoner Eddie Hatcher. Eddie served almost seven years in a North Carolina prison for his political action of February 1, 1988 when he occupied the offices of the Robesonian Newspaper demanding investigations into corrupt law enforcement and the racist judicial system.

The Center is dedicated to the Human Rights issues within NC but also is concened and willing to address Human Rights problems all over the United States. The Center addresses the rights of people of color, Native American issues, the problem of Political Prisoners in the US, Gay Rights and the issue of exposing the corrupt, illegal and covert acts of NC Senator Jesse Helms. We firmly feel that the actions of Senator Helms have served to oppress and destroy people all over the world and he and his staff must be stopped.

The Center is in the process of receiving non-profit status. We accept donations from individuals, foundations and any available source. Without the help of you we would not be able to do the much needed work. Please make a donation to the address elsewhere in this article.

# Texas Prison Labor Union

Willie A. Milton, a prisoner confined in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice-institutional division at the Darrington Unit is the co-founder and Executive Director of the Texas Prison Labor Union, which is at its ground level state of organization. The official charter is being drafted and to be tentatively filed within the next few weeks. Because of this and the fact that making this collective effort a reality is being done without any funding. To offer assistance, or to get more information on this, all correspondence should be directed to:

Ricky Long, #490671  
Route 3, Box 59  
Rosharon, TX 77583.

or

(b) Willie A. Milton, #561014,  
Route 3, Box 59  
Rosharon, TX 77583

Thank you for any assistance given in this matter.

## Notice To Canadians in u\$ Prisons

Many prisoners have written letters asking for advice on transfer to canadian prisons.. Several factors have delayed the process in replying, such as the fact that the connection in Toronto was swamped with mail. Anyone who is awaiting a reply, kindly send a kite with an outside address to streamline the process. Do excuse the delay, you have not been forgotten. Write to: PVP @ 101-106 Beverly Toronto M5T 1Y2

Prison News Service is published bimonthly, except for July/August. It is edited by the Bulldozer collective and published by PSC Publishers. All letters, articles, artwork, subscription requests, etc. should be sent to:

Prison News Service  
P.O. Box 5052, Stn A  
Toronto, Ont  
Canada M5W 1W4

Subscriptions:  
Non-prisoners — \$10.00/6 issues.  
More if you can, less if you can't  
Institutions \$25.00/Yr.  
All American subscriptions payable in American dollars. Make checks payable to PSC Publishers.

Issue #51 – May-June 1995  
Date of Issue – June 1995  
U.S. Second Class postage paid at Lewiston, N.Y. 14092 under UPS #011172  
U.S. Postmaster: address changes to: PSC Publishers  
P.O. Box 1254  
Lewiston, NY 14092-8254

Canadian Publication Mail  
Registration Number 8843  
Canada Post, address changes to: Prison News Service  
P.O. Box 5052, Stn A  
Toronto, Ont M5W 1W4

All personal address changes should be sent to the Toronto address.  
U.S. Office of publication  
Lewiston NY 14092

Printed in Canada  
Indexed by Alternative Press Index  
Deadline for next issue is September 1, 1995  
E-mail: sage!pns@noc.tor.hookup.net  
This issue is going to press on June 15, 1995.  
There will be no July-August issue.



## CSC guard has history of brutality

Eight or nine years ago while I was serving as the secretary for the inmate committee at Kingston Pen, I was involved in an incident in which Barry Aitchison, one of the guards charged with in the Robert Gentles murder, figured prominently.

A hostage taking in a prison shop ended with the Institutional Emergency Response Team forcibly entering the area, assaulting prisoners indiscriminately although only one was involved in the hostage-taking.

The hostage-taker was wounded in the siege, so he was cuffed, shackled and strapped to a stretcher and driven to an outside hospital by ambulance.

Our committee received information not long. Afterwards that the hostage-taker had been assaulted by guards on the way top the hospital in the ambulance. We asked the warden Mary Dawson, to investigate this complaint. Her "investigation" was asking Security Chief Don McBroom if the assault had occurred. We were all assured that there had been no assault in the ambulance.

We were not satisfied by the response so I wrote a letter to the Solicitor-General, Perrin Beatty, and requested that he investigate the matter. I specifically asked that the ambulance driver be interviewed in the course of the investigation.

Surprisingly, shortly afterwards an investigator from CSC headquarters in Ottawa turned up at our office with a cassette recorder to take statements from all witnesses. I reiterated to him that the ambulance driver should be questioned and he assured me this would be done.

The investigation was completed and amazingly, three guards were found guilty of assaulting the man in the ambulance. Mary Dawson was called on to discipline the three. One guard was fired from his position, and the two others were fined a total of \$6000. The guard fired was the same Barry Aitchison now in court.

Aitchison was successful in his grievance and was reinstated to his job approximately

eight months after being dismissed by Warden Dawson. He received a great deal of public sympathy and favourable publicity, and was given prominence by local television and other newscasts.

One of Aitchison's first actions upon his return to duty was to go to my cell on the second tier, and dump anything he felt should not be in my cell, such as the scrap of carpeting I had laid on the concrete floor, over the rail to the floor below.

The union to which Aitchison belongs is just as guilty as Aitchison and Wylie because it condones and supports the behaviour of its' members no matter how illegal, or how lethal, such behaviour may be. All CSC employees are aware that they can commit any crime, any atrocity and their union will support them 100%. They need not worry about legal fees, nor their jobs because CSC will not fire them for merely assaulting or killing a prisoner. After all, why should a fine upstanding citizen such as Aitchison be penalized for the brave and heroic act of beating a helpless individual bound to a stretcher, or for helping to kill a prisoner who was at the mercy of eight or nine of his colleagues. It's surprising he hasn't been awarded a medal by the government. But perhaps they are waiting the outcome of the trial.

The prisoner on the stretcher subsequently launched a suit against CSC for the assault against him. He was awarded a substantial sum by a Federal Court judge who called Aitchison and Company a "band of thugs".

It is to be hoped that when the Gentles case goes to trial, the jury will be made aware of Aitchison's past performance and his subsequent dismissal and reinstatement. They then might not be predisposed to write off the death of Gentles as another case of a "bad guy who got what he deserved". No one deserved his fate at the hands of a band of thugs.

An observer

## Letter to all prisoners – let's move forward

The number of anti-prison and prisoner support movement activities throughout north america will reach an unsurpassed number this year. In Toronto and vicinity alone, two prisoner art shows are scheduled, an international conference, a national workshop on HIV/AIDS in prisons, a regional activist gathering and the solidarity events for Prisoners' Justice Day.

Activists in leadership and organizational roles are critically analyzing their initiatives. What is being questioned is at the very root of support and advocacy work. People are looking at the past, what worked and failed and what to plan for the future? What it all amounts to is a need to develop priorities to direct their activism. And what are the principles that should guide such efforts?

The common thread throughout the growing network are the prisoners we work with and for. It is to them that we must look for direction and some leadership for our work. Prisoners must decide what it is that they want and are willing to work for. They must set the priorities for the public support and lobby.

We can develop alternatives for our failing system of justice. But it requires some responsibility on all levels, with prisoners taking some initiative. It is the only way for a worthwhile effort and effective movement.

For the development of a more effective movement, (ex)prisoners must set the agenda for upcoming events. There is already leadership and input from community activists, so they need to hear from prisoners. Only a concerted effort will have an effect.

One of the projects has been a plan to

publish an additional broadsheet, reporting on local and regional issues. Toronto and vicinity has become a centre for prisoner support and abolitionist activity that will be more effective in a such a community based publication.

PNS hopes to begin publishing *The Kite* this coming fall. A priority is to raise funds for this while outreach is being done and connections are made with representatives of community initiative for the publication to be as inclusive as possible. There will be discussion on this during the upcoming gathering of activists in July. The new publication will report on justice issues, especially news of provincial prisons, as well as serve as a forum for currently marginalized individuals and groups. We will require more close contact with prisoners for news which we know about but often lack the facts and important information that we wish to publish.

Close to a hundred letters from prisoners arrive in our mailboxes on a weekly basis. I try to read and respond to as many as humanly possible. It helps me stay in touch with the community I feel connected to. And up to date on the issues. I know what is going on in the prisons and feel compelled to put my two cents in towards some kind of positive change. What I feel a need for however, is to connect with prison activists and leaders, prisoners who know about commitment. And call for you all to help us set the agenda for the coming activities you can read about in the resources section at the back of this issue. One of the specific things we are asking for is prisoners to list the demands for us to publicize during Prisoners' Justice Day events. We look forward to hearing from you.



## New Peltier trial appeal motion filed

On Monday, May 15, 1995 lawyers for Leonard Peltier filed an unprecedented legal motion in the federal Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in a direct request for the re-opening of his appeal for a new trial. With all legal avenues seemingly exhausted since the dismissal of his third and latest appeal on July 7, 1993, it is extraordinary that his case is being re-introduced back into the United States judicial system on the grounds of a mistake that has sat on record and uncorrected for the past 10 years.

In 1986 during Leonard's second appeal, the testimony of a government prosecution witness, Norman Brown, which placed Leonard at the agents' cars during the shoot-out, was erroneously taken into consideration by the three-panel judges and could likely have been a prime factor in the ruling against Leonard. Although Brown gave his testimony before a grand jury, he recanted at trial, testifying that he had been coerced by the FBI to lie. This misconception was neither corrected by Mr. Peltier's attorneys or the government. The court's final ruling dismissed the appeal by what judges determined was the distinction between a "possibility and a probability," as they required probable grounds to agree to the appeal and determined they found only "possible" grounds.

Leonard was convicted on April 18, 1977 for the deaths of two FBI agents and sentenced to two consecutive life sentences. The testimony of a government ballistics expert was later completely contradicted when Leonard's defense introduced previously suppressed evidence which stated

that a rifle linked to him could not have shot the fatal bullets. The Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals stated that key, exculpatory ballistics evidence had been "withheld from the defense." No eyewitness has ever placed Leonard near the bodies of the two agents. Government prosecutors have admitted in open court that they "don't know who killed the agents" and yet Leonard Peltier has served almost 20 years of false imprisonment.

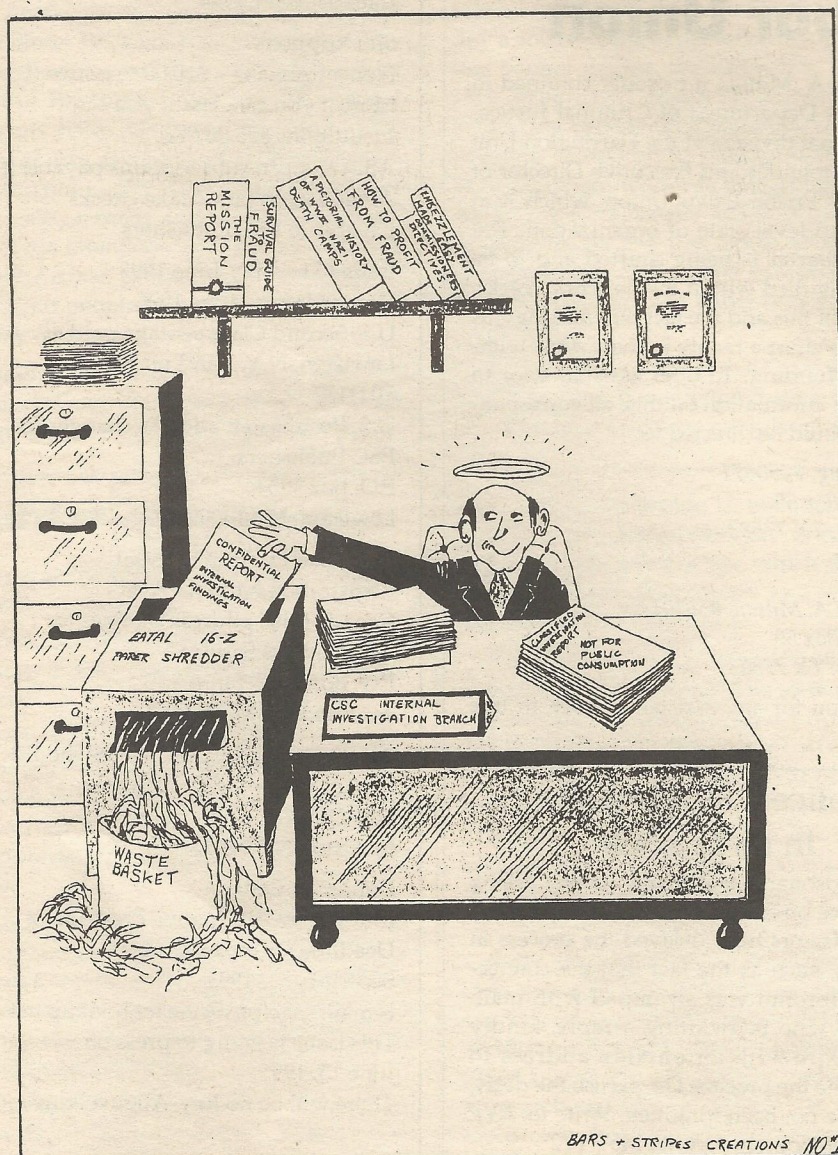
A decision to re-open the appeal will likely take several months, but could be as early as June. Meanwhile, Leonard's clemency request is still pending and we are asking people to phone, fax and send their letters to President Clinton and to U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno. Write to: President Bill Clinton, Executive Office of the President, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C. U.S.A. 20500. Fax at (202) 456-2461. To Janet Reno, Attorney General, Dept. of Justice, 10th & Constitution, Washington, D.C. U.S.A. 20530. Fax: (202) 514-4371.

For more information, contact:

LPDC  
P.O. Box 583  
Lawrence, Kansas  
U.S.A. 66044  
(tel: (913) 842-5774; Fax: (913) 842-5796.

For information in Canada, contact:

LPDC-Canada  
43 Chandler Dr.  
Scarborough, Ontario  
(Tel/Fax: (416) 439-1893; E-mail to web/apc networks: lpdccfd@web.apc.org).





# Iron House Drum

Greetings:

I've been so busy working a construction job the last couple months that I haven't had time to really prepare anything for the "Iron House Drum" for this issue. I'll be getting back on track next issue. Until then, a word to you Bro's who are waiting for the Center for Advocacy of Human Rights to take action on your behalf regarding your spiritual struggle: Please be patient. We'll be taking care of business no later than the end of June. Please read my statement regarding the ACA project which appears in this edition of *PNS* and you'll have a better understanding of what my situation is.

I would like to share a couple of poems with you all that I wrote several years ago. I'm not a poet, but sometimes my heart speaks that way. I wrote "I am Not Alone" for Leonard Peltier and Nelson Mandela before Nelson was released from prison. Today I dedicate to all prisoners everywhere who are using your "time" to grow, and using your growth to bring peace, harmony, respect and love to this earth and our communities.

The second poem is dedicated to those who have gone before us.

Ho! Heceto yelo.  
Little Rock Reed

## I Am Not Alone

As I inhabit  
this desolate cube  
whose walls secrete  
the gloom and  
languid death  
to which my life  
is condemned

and as I peer  
through the depths  
of pages  
whose pictures elaborate  
Mother Earth weeping  
for her children  
lost  
to poverty  
hunger  
disease  
hopelessness  
desolation  
under the gaze  
of deaf leaders'  
plastic eyes  
of greed  
and trolling  
apathetic songs  
of empty promise

my eyes spill

my heart

revealing



new strength  
to carry the  
burden  
of this cube  
in knowing

I am not alone.

## No Neutral Ground

"Ain't no real convicts left,"  
they snivel  
in feigned reminiscence  
of a time  
when they were real ones.

Respect.

A word without substance, that.  
It cannot extend  
to others from those who  
lack it for themselves,  
much less bounce back again.

Inmate.

Nasty word, that.  
Denoting diseased  
psychopath receiving treatment.  
But it escapes even  
those so classified  
as they feign reminiscence  
of a time when they weren't.

"Correctional Facility."

Another antiseptic lie.  
This is a prison.  
We are prisoners.  
We are oppressed,  
dehumanized,  
repressed out of existence.

Resist.

If we don't,  
we perpetuate  
the grinding forces  
that crush the spirit  
of those who do.  
Thus  
we become the oppressors,  
the dehumanizing  
agents of repression.

There is no neutral ground.

## Info wanted on juvenile detention

I would like to hear from adult survivors of juvenile detention centers, and young people currently incarcerated in juvenile facilities who have suffered any type of abuse while in that institution. I am an adult survivor of state sanctioned child abuse that I suffered in the late 1960's. I was incarcerated for the "crime" of being a "Stubborn Child" (a three hundred old law that was abolished in Mass. in the early 1970s) and a runaway. The abuses that I experienced at Lancaster caused me to experience great difficulties throughout my life. I am interested in working with other survivors on what can be done to expose and make states accountable for the crimes committed against children.

The training schools for both boys and girls in Massachusetts were closed by Jerome Miller in the early 1970s because of the brutal abuse of the children entrusted in their care. Tragically in other states, such as New Jersey the training schools are still in operation today. *Stubborn Child* is an important book written by Mark Devlin about the brutality he experienced growing up in the juvenile system in Massachusetts. It may be available in your local library.

The Massachusetts Advocacy Center published *Delinquent Justice; Juvenile Detention Practices in Massachusetts* in the early 1980's. This report focused on what juvenile detention facilities were left in Mass. after the training schools were closed, what problems existed in those facilities, and recommendations for change. Many of the recommendations were not followed up on and no other report has been done since then.

It is critical that juvenile institutions in operation today be closely monitored to prevent the type of abuses that happened in the Massachusetts training schools. Experience has shown that when institutions are not properly monitored, horrible abuses happen to children.

Who is responsible for monitoring juvenile institutions today, what are their standards? The American Correctional Association (ACA) monitors juvenile institutions on a "voluntary" basis. The ACA charges a fee for the standards, around \$30.00 for each standards publication! Who monitors the ACA? These are questions that need to be answered.

I am also interested in hearing from other interested groups and people that could assist in this project. Humane programs that work to help troubled children must be a priority, and all abuse and punitive programs must be abolished. Many thanks to Little Rock Reed and the Center for Advocacy of Human Rights for their interest and help in these critical issues.

Please send any correspondence to:

Attention: Janie M. Howard; Advocate  
Social Service Help  
393 Main Street  
Greenfield MA 01301

## Native Prisoners need support

Richard Ortega #198907  
MCC Box 500  
Boydton VA 23917-0500

Doak Wellington #728  
Box 500 AZ-14  
Appleton, MN 56208

David Wolf Walker  
Box 131  
Cherry Creek, NY 14723

Glenn Edward Seeley  
P.O. Box 369  
Springfield, SD 57062

Jon Knarr B2-0473  
RD #10, Box 10  
Greensburg PA 15601

John Blackburn #229-259  
30420 Revells Neck Rd.  
Westover, MD 21871

Richard Patterson #93 B 0943  
P.O. Box 104  
Soneya NY 14556-0001

Charles Renchenski  
1100 Pike St AP 8124  
Huntingdon PA 16654-1112

Edward B. Jenkins E 60350  
7018 Blair Rd A4-119  
Calipatria, CA 92233-5001

Murphy Thomas 118854  
P.O. Box 10 OID  
Stillwater, MN 55082-0010

Eldred Iron Moccasin  
P.O. Box 5911  
Sioux Falls, SD 57117

Matt Hansen 15784  
Utah State Prison  
P.O. Box 250  
Draper UT 84020

Luis Rodriguez C 33000  
Box 7500 D-5-217  
Crescent City CA 95532

Alex Montana #448568  
3001 S. Emily Dr.  
Beeville TX 78102

La Vern Rogers #40256  
Box 900-I  
Sturtevant WI 53177

Scott Dominy #84 B 1916  
P.O. Box 4580  
Rome NY 13442

John Boroughs #860453  
P.O. Box 30 38 3J  
Pendleton IN 46064

Jon Mareska # 52446  
P.O. Box 311  
El Dorado KS 67042

Michaele Belaire # 59924  
P.O. Box 546 Norton C.F.  
Norton KS 67654-0546

David Allen Castillo 770  
Ellis One Unit  
Huntsville TX 77343

Edmond H. Willis # 466282  
P.O. Box 32 Walls Unit  
Huntsville TX 77348

Robert Golden # 607915  
Rt 4 Box 1200  
Rosharon TX 77583

Dewson T Pandoah # 285746  
WA State Prison  
P.O. Box 520 IMU - E -06  
Walla Walla WA 99362

Michael Esperanza #4152815  
2605 State St.  
Salem, OR 97310

Robert Knott  
P.O. Box 8500, A.D.X.  
Florence, CO 81226-8500

Milford Slader #04283-073  
Box 1000  
Oxford WI 53952-1000

Erwin Bartlett #123787  
P.O. Box 628  
Lake Butler, FL 32054

Steve Syder #216-694  
P.O. Box 511  
Columbus, OH 43216

James Hunt #BD 7469 Unit D/A  
301 Morea Rd.  
Frackville, PA 17932

Les Pewo #204 634  
P.O. Box 1368  
Mansfield OH 44901



PROTECT THE EARTH

### PJD 95 down florida way

In memory of prisoners who've died unnatural deaths, by neglect, suicide, assassination, or the like; bringing awareness of these and other atrocities from conditions in particular prisons or the gulag as a whole. On August 10th florida prisoners are encouraged to participate in International Prisoners' Justice Day - just as every year on that date - by refusing to work, without letting the Fear factor hold you in check by pervading your soul.

by a florida field marshal

Prisoners resisting in solidarity on Aug 10th are vulnerable to reprisals from prisoncrats and need community support from activists. For info write to PNS for issues of PJD Bulletin.-ed



# A statement from Little Rock Reed re: the ACA litigation Project

May 28, 1995

Greetings in solidarity:

I trust this finds you all in strong health and spirits. As for myself, I'm doing well. I've got about three hundred pieces of mail here to respond to, some of them dating back awhile, and I wanted those of you who haven't heard from me recently to know that I'm still here, I've got your correspondence, and I'll be getting to you soon. In the meantime, I've got a few things I'd like to discuss.

On April 10, Deborah Garlin and I sent a form letter out to all the prisoners involved in our ACA litigation project (for those of you who are not familiar with this project, you should read my article that appeared in the November/December 1994 issue of PNS or the April issue of Prison Legal News). In our April 10 letter, we explained our money situation and asked the prisoners to locate sponsors for the ACA project. We asked the prisoners to come up with \$20 per month (for each prisoner involved) to fund the project. Of course, we know that this is impossible for many prisoners to do, and we don't expect for everyone to be able to raise money (that's why Deborah and I are working so hard on raising funds and locating sponsors). However, most prisoners are in a position to pool some money together, and I know this to be true based on my experience in the joint. When I was at Lucasville, prisoners who weren't active in prisoners' rights issues nevertheless expressed their appreciation and support by giving me stamps, envelopes and paper to enable me to do my prisoners' rights work, because they knew my work was having a positive effect on their living conditions. In our April 10th form letter to the prisoners, we asked that the prisoners involved try to do the same. While most of the prisoners understood our financial situation and the need to take on this responsibility, a few have not responded and one responded very negatively. I want to reprint that prisoners' letter, which was addressed to Deborah and my response to him, because I think that this exchange of words expresses his spirit of our work here, and I want those of you to see it who may have the same things in your minds that this prisoners did when he wrote. So, here is the text of his letter, which was dated May 8, 1995:

Dear Deborah:

Frankly I'm still debating as to the reason why I'm even responding to an impersonal form letter that pleads for \$240 a year on promises that have no guarantee of success. Is it because I smell a sham? In negligently to state in the articles about the \$20 a month fee you've led prisoners to believe that you organization was not asking for money but just to pay their immediate expenses. I will give you the betterment of the doubt as to the ACA project, but will not send \$20 for I cannot afford or obtain those kinds of funds. I will pay certain costs but only within my very tight budget. I will remind you that I've been in a control unit for four years and that I am a writer/poet, prison activist and socialist that's willing to try anything in hope of changing our oppressive environment.

Last but surely not least, if you're still interested in having my help and input on the ACA project, then find my last correspondence which should be in your files (that's if you kept it) and respond in a personal way.

I remain, In *true* struggle,

John Doe

P.S. If I find that you are running a scam I promise that many progressive, socialist and prison publications will be notified through press release of your intent. I can't allow my fellow prisoners to be ripped.

I felt like doggin' this guy when we got his letter, but decided to approach him as a young comrade instead, because that's what he really is. Here was my response:

Greetings John:

I respect the fact that you would expose anyone trying to run a scam on prisoners under the guise of being prisoners' rights activist, and I encourage you always to keep a weary eye on those who ask for money. But let me tell you about where I come from.

We just received your letter dated May 8, 1995, so now this makes approximately 75 letters that I'm supposed to answer, most of them much more complex than yours, his doesn't include all the letters that I must review and respond to, when I personally respond to all the people involved in the project who return status reports as discussed in our memo of April 10 (such as your initial letter to us, which I just read again) — add those and the count exceeds 300; Plus I'm assisting Native American prisoners in at least ten states on religious freedom issues. I work a construction job full-time because I can't live on air alone, and I'm in debt about \$20,000 for legal fees to beat extradition to Ohio where the government has already kept me imprisoned (mostly in control units) for a lot of years because I stand up as strong as anyone in this country for prisoners' rights. Now they want to kill me. So, my friend, you tell me: Where am I supposed to raise the money to enable me to quit this construction job so I can answer all these letters and do all the other work involved in this ACA litigation project and Native American prisoners' litigation? — And you must exclude any illegal fundraising activities, because I've already done one life sentence and don't want to do another or get killed prematurely.

When I was a young punk I cleared about \$60,000 per robbery, so if I was of a mind to make money illegally, do you think I'd be stupid enough to play on jailhouse lawyers or any other group of destitute, intelligent people? For many years now I have had the utmost respect among the true prisoners' rights activists in this country. Check around and find out who I am, Bro, and I think you'll find that I don't run con games.

And it's true, there is no guarantee of success in this project. But when you've been around a little longer, you'll come to see that this project has as good a chance of success as anything else going in the way of prisoners' rights in this country. What "guarantees" can you really expect? "Guarantee" of anything from where you stand? C'mon, be real.

If it's impossible for you to raise \$20 a month to help us with this project, then there's no "guarantee" that you'll hear from us again because we can't do anything effectively in this movement without money for basic expenses. But I am working on finding sponsors, and if I can raise the funds so that the burden doesn't have to fall on the brothers and sisters inside who are willing to sacrifice so much to bring the changes we need to make, then you'll be hearing from me again, because I think you could really be helpful to this project.

But again, there are no guarantees.

As a final note, I'd like to let you know that I have been working tirelessly and made some significant sacrifices, without any personal gain beyond a solid reputation, on behalf of prisoners' rights for well over as decade. As for Deborah, she's been supporting prisoners' rights work for several years also. In fact, she closed her [law] practice in California and has been working for prisoners' rights, using money out of her own pocket, for the past two years.

Now she's depleted her resources which we both have been depending on, and is going to work also. To be quite frank, she's pretty upset with your letter and implied accusations and threats, and rightfully so after all she has given without so much as a thanks from most of the prisoners who ask her for help. Being skeptical is okay, my friend, but it's not very good practice to accuse or make threats toward people who you apparently know nothing about.

At any rate, that's all I have to say for now. Until next time, you will remain in our prayers. Keep strong.

From the Trenches  
Little Rock Reed



It is also worth noting that in our April 10 memo that got this prisoner so upset, we were very clear about what the prisoners could expect from us in return for their commitment — and what they can expect from us is far more than they can expect from any other organization in this country — and we pointed out that I'm willing to work full-time (and overtime) on this project for a mere minimum wage, which really isn't a lot to ask. I don't have to help anyone inside. I'm a free man and I owe no prisoner a thing. I don't appreciate being disrespected by prisoners who think we owe them something, or who presume that we are required to jump when they send us unsolicited correspondence demanding all kinds of service. To those of you such as the prisoner who wrote that letter reprinted above who haven't been around very long, if you want to make a difference in this struggle, try to communicate with people like us with a little courtesy or you won't get anywhere, because no one will take you seriously. (And incidentally, for those of you who don't know, the Center for Advocacy of Human Rights is operated by only Deborah and I from an office inside our mobile home (I shouldn't say "our," because we're renting). This office is not much larger than your average prison cell. If we had money, we wouldn't ask prisoners to help us with the expenses.)

At any rate, the Center for Advocacy of Human Rights (CAHR) will be receiving a small grant in the second week of June that will enable me to work full-time (at minimum wage) for the Center so that I can start catching up on things. The grant, which will not allay any of the actual expenses of the project (such as mailing, paper, copies, etc.) will only last for two months. During this time, in addition to catching up on our correspondence, we will be working on raising funds so that there will be no more financial barriers with the ACA litigation project or with our work on Native prisoners' issues. These efforts on our part don't relieve prisoners of their responsibility to help out with finances if you are in a position to.

As of this date, we've got about 40 states and well over a hundred prisoners (male

and female) involved in the ACA project. It's a good project with great potential. Some of the best jailhouse lawyers in the country are involved, and some of those people who aren't in prisons accredited by the ACA, such as Paul Wright, editor of *Prison Legal News*, are involved as advisors/strategists. So, things are looking good. For those of you who are in prisons accredited by the ACA or undergoing the accreditation process, if you are not involved yet but are interested in the project, send us a stamp (don't pre-address the envelope). And if someone in your prison is already involved and asks you to support their efforts by donating time or money, I urge you to support them, as they are doing something that will make your living conditions better in the future. If you don't know whether you don't know if your prison is accredited by the ACA or undergoing the accreditation process, simply write to your warden to find out. If your prison isn't associated with the ACA, then the prisoners at your institution won't have standing against the ACA, so don't waste your time on this project. But if it is, you really should consider contacting us or having a jailhouse lawyer from your institution contact us.

I also want to caution you brothers and sisters who are involved in the ACA project to be careful about who you let know you're involved (as you well know, a significant number of prisoners are informants and will do anything for a pat on the butt by their wardens). The American Correctional Association is obviously very concerned about our plans to expose their corruption. They contacted Paul Wright's father a couple days after my article, "A Viable ACA Litigation Strategy," appeared in *Prison Legal News* (the article was titled "A Viable Revolutionary Strategy" in a previous edition of *Prison News Service*). The ACA wanted a copy of the *Prison Legal News*' mailing list. Now, I can't think of any legitimate reason why the ACA would suddenly want that listing of jailhouse lawyers' names, because they've never sought nor accepted constructive input from the prisoners in the past.

So, without suggesting that the ACA intends to conspire with prison officials to sabotage this project by retaliating against or otherwise disrupting prisoners' progress, just be aware that the ACA is very concerned, and I would advise you prisoners to proceed with extreme caution. The ACA has been known to condone illegal actions against prisoner activists by its members. In fact, my own situation is a case in point. The ACA's president-elect, Reginald Wilkinson — also the director of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction — has been fully aware of his underlings' conspiracy to have me imprisoned for speaking and writing about corruption within the Ohio prison and parole system. The head officials of the ACA are fully aware of Wilkinson's involvement and have been asked, in light of the New Mexico District court's decision confirming the conspiracy, to intervene and have Wilkinson take corrective action with respect to my case. Of course, as is standard for the ACA, the officials have never acknowledged receipt of our correspondence. Thus, Wilkinson and his cronies still have a warrant out for my arrest all over the country. For the time being, I am safe only in New Mexico, but I have faith that this will change within a few months.

Well, that's basically everything I wanted to say for now. For those of you who still have attitudes because we asked you to take on some personal fundraising responsibilities, I wish you the best. And for those of you who can appreciate where I'm coming from and wish to continue working with us, you keep strong. I'll be getting to you in the near future. ~

In Solidarity  
Little Rock Reed  
Center for Advocacy of Human Rights  
Box 880  
Taos de Ranchos, NM 87557



# Native Brothers in Tennessee need help

April 13/95 - Native American Brothers on Tennessee's death row, as plaintiffs in a civil rights religious lawsuit filed in federal district court, Nashville Division, seek the assistance of qualified expert witness(es) to establish, through deposition and/or trial testimony, that Sweat Lodge Ceremonies, traditional dress, Sacred herbs, Prayer Medicine Blankets and Religious Ceremonies are important elements in the Native American faith, beliefs and traditional culture. Once these facts are established through qualified expert witness(es), plaintiffs will show that total deprivation and restriction of these elements by the defendants' policies and actions "substantially burden" the plaintiffs' freedom of religion. Plaintiffs will also show the court that defendants' asserted "compelling government interests" lack sufficient basis of support under plaintiffs' unique situation and that there are "least restrictive means" to afford plaintiffs' freedom of religion equally proportionate to the freedoms defendants afford other faiths.

All other faiths are allowed to conduct daily prayer, but the Native American Indians are being arbitrarily denied access to essential Sacred herbs to conduct traditional prayer. All other faiths are provided special observances such as Easter Sunrise Service, Ramadan, etc., but the Native American Indians are not provided equal special observances by exclusively being prohibited any and all solstice-equinox Sweat Lodge Ceremonies. Other faith groups are allowed deviations from dress code policy to accommodate religious needs, such as allowing Kufis and Yarmulkes to be worn throughout the institution, however, defendants arbitrarily prohibit plaintiffs from wearing headbands or breechclothes in equal proportion. Defendants further accommodate other faith groups' religious needs by allowing prayer rugs for the Muslims, but fail to give the Native American Indians the same consideration on Prayer Blankets. Defendants provide other faith groups two weekly services while only providing Native American Indians one service per week. All other faith groups have their designated worship areas respected during their services, however, the Native American Indians must conduct their weekly ceremonial prayer in concrete and steel cages while other recreational activities are being conducted in adjoining cages, that is, weightlifting, basketball, handball, dominoes, and card games, with their associated swearing and loud exchanges amongst fellow prisoners. The problems are numerous and very well documented.

The only time that the Native American Indians are able to conduct any type of traditional prayer is limited to one time per week and then that depends entirely upon availability and attendance of an unpaid religious volunteer. Since plaintiffs are being arbitrarily denied access to essential Sacred Herbs, plaintiffs must depend entirely upon the religious volunteer to bring such when he/she can come to the prison to conduct prayer ceremonies. For whatever reasons that may prevent a volunteer from attending on the weekly day and time schedule, the Native American Indians are being deprived of prayer totally. Plaintiffs have not been able to conduct any type of traditional prayer since November 1994, due to the unavailability of a religious volunteer. No other faith groups are as severely restricted/prohibited as are the Native American Indians.

The Native American Indians' "constitutional" rights have to take a backseat to other "privilege" programs, in a very discriminatory manner. This is true because the Chaplains, Cobb (Presbyterian) and Hall (Methodist), after being made fully aware of plaintiffs' religious needs, contin-

ue to arbitrarily and discriminatorily deny plaintiffs' submitted requests for necessary policy changes to accommodate the Native American Indians in equal proportion as they do other faith groups. For example, despite the same religious principles applying to the Native American Indians' headbands and the Muslims' Kufis and the Jewish Yarmulkes, the defendants allow the Kufis and Yarmulkes to be worn throughout the institutions in the state, whereas, the headbands are not allowed to be worn by the Native American Indians, which is arbitrary, discriminatory and unequal treatment. The headbands are no more of a security threat than are the Kufis and Yarmulkes. Yet the defendants refuse the plaintiffs' repeated requests to add the headbands to the personal property policy to accommodate the Native American Indians' faith.

Within the last week, starting from April 7/95 to April 12/95, there have been approximately five verbal confrontations between the plaintiffs and the death row unit's staff over the plaintiffs' wearing their headbands. During the same time, there have been five or six different verbal and/or written policies on whether or not plaintiffs can wear their headbands, ranging from allowing only the wearing of white headbands, to wearing only beaded headbands, to allowing plaintiffs to wear the headbands anywhere but to their work stations, to not being able to wear the headbands, period. There was even a warden's memorandum allowing us to possess colored headbands (bandannas), but we could not display them on our person. Each time the plaintiffs attempted to follow the newest policy, it was changed and plaintiffs were harassed. Finally, plaintiffs decided to not take off their headbands at all, regardless of the newest policy variation. The situation is now very volatile. Plaintiffs are not being allowed to wear their headbands and as such cannot come out of their cells for work, law, library, recreation, etc., unless they deny their religious beliefs and remove their headbands.

On the present legal action, the Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit *vacated and remanded* the negative decision against the plaintiffs, by the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee, Nashville Division, for further proceedings not inconsistent with the "least restrictive" means of furthering the governmental interest in denying plaintiffs' religious rights as enacted in the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, Pub. L. 103-141. See *Besh v Dutton*, U.S. App. Lexis 3584 (1995).

Plaintiffs are represented by several third-year law students, at Vanderbilt School of Law, under the tutelage of Professor Susan Kay, all of whom are non-Native American Indians. In the first district court hearing there were several critical mistakes made, due to the students' lack of understanding and knowledge of plaintiffs' beliefs and culture, coupled with the judge's obvious bias against plaintiffs' Spiritual beliefs. Even though the present law students doing the litigation are different from the ones who litigated the first hearing, and even though these present students seem more conscientious about safeguarding plaintiffs' beliefs, their lack of understanding and knowledge of the plaintiffs' beliefs will hamper their representation, regardless of how many books they read dealing with these Spiritual matters. The most glaring mistake made in the first hearing was when Professor Susan Kay denied plaintiffs' repeated requests for her to obtain qualified expert testimony.

Plaintiffs are now seeking, on their own, qualified expert witness(es) and/or legal representation and/or co-counsel (advisor) representation for present counsel who are

versed in the field of Native American beliefs and cultures. The hearing is imminent as is the need for contacting plaintiffs and/or their attorneys. When the plaintiffs prevail, this case will set a precedent for religious freedom accessibility for all Borthers and Sisters who are imprisoned, regardless of their faith beliefs. The barriers of resistance and ignorance must be smashed now while the wall is weakened. For further details, contact Susan Kay, if you desire to be an expert witness or co-counsel or to offer legal guidance. If you desire to take over the case, contact Terry "Ghosthunter" Barber. ∞

Susan Kay  
Vanderbilt School of Law  
Vanderbilt Legal Clinic  
Nashville, TN 37204  
Phone: (615) 322-4964  
Fax: (615) 322-6631

Terry "Ghosthunter" Barber #111196  
RMSI 2-D-104  
7475 Cockrill Bend Ind. Rd.  
Nashville, TN  
37209-1010

We would also appreciate any other Spiritual guidance from traditional Brothers and Sisters. We are also seeking Spiritual volunteers to come into our prison Circle and guide us on the traditional path of our Ancestors.

In peace and in the struggle:

Derrick Quintero  
RMSI 2-D-105  
7475 Cockrill Bend Ind. Rd.  
Nashville, TN 37209-1010



## Bulldozer notes

**NO SUMMER ISSUE:** There will be no July-August issue. A few years ago we realized that missing the summer issue helped ensure that we would be in the mental and physical condition to continue with the work for another year. But given all the activities planned for this summer, (see back page for a list) it doesn't seem we'll get that much time to lie around and bake in the sun.

**ANOTHER SCREW-UP:** We screwed up a notice for a friend and artist last issue due to a misplaced letter. Foo Chee Seng who provided the art work for both the front cover and the centrespread, is a Malaysian-Chinese male, 35-years old, currently in Europe who would like to hear from Canadians. He has a strong interest in anti-fascist work. Write:

Foo Chee Seng  
JVA Krefelderstr 251  
52070 Aachen Germany

**AMERICAN STAMPS:** Normally we are unable to make use of any more than a few American stamps, but we've now in a position where we can substitute them for American cash for certain of our expenses, which since it costs us \$1.45 Canadian for each American dollar, can help ease our situation. So if you're a prisoner and can get a few extra stamps and want to help out,

please send them our way. They'll be put to good use.

**PRISON CONFERENCE:** On the back page there is information about a prison conference being planned for Toronto this summer, with most of the initiative and work coming from *Arm The Spirit*. Our own time is too limited to really put the energy into the conference that is deserves, but after some struggle, the direction of the conference has become clearer. We want to see real work come out of this conference. Networking is fine, but if it only results in having a few more friends, well ... So if you're coming, please come with a working attitude, particularly for anyone who is already involved in doing prison work. Give some serious thought to what you want to get out of the conference and what you can contribute. Be willing to say something, but be thoughtful. One doesn't need to be experienced to make a contribution. Good questions arising out of inexperience can be very useful. And there will be an emphasis on "skills", you can learn how to do anti-prison work. No one, especially local people, should feel discouraged from coming by what I just said. But let's make sure that all the work and money that goes into this conference results in more and better work over the next year.



# HIV/AIDS in prison systems: a comprehensive strategy

We are reprinting this set of recommendations because, unfortunately, little has changed since their original publication. Although considered a comprehensive working document, it seems many officials are still content to bury their heads in the sand where HIV/AIDS in prison is concerned. -ed.

## Executive summary

The Prisoners with AIDS/HIV Support Action Network (PASAN) is an Ontario coalition formed to advocate for the development and implementation of suitable provincial and federal policies on HIV/AIDS in prisons. PASAN's members include ex-prisoners and representatives from a variety of community-based organizations involved with prison issues and/or HIV/AIDS.

The AIDS crisis is devastating Canadian prisoners. Inmates are becoming infected with HIV during their incarceration because they do not have the information and resources to protect themselves. Once infected, their lives are endangered by a lack of access both to doctors specializing in HIV/AIDS and to non-approved treatments and alternative therapies. And prisoners with HIV/AIDS are maltreated. For example, they are often needlessly forced into isolation and their confidentiality is routinely violated because both guards and fellow prisoners are under the false impression that if they know who is infected then they need not take precautions to avoid HIV infection themselves.

The AIDS crisis in prison systems is a product of government inaction. HIV transmission could be prevented and the health of prisoners with HIV/AIDS could be improved by the implementation of a comprehensive HIV/AIDS policy, encompassing education and prevention programs, and support and medical services.

PASAN urges both the provincial and federal governments to formulate and to implement such comprehensive HIV/AIDS policies. Our recommendations for the content of these policies are summarized below.

At the provincial level, we propose that

a joint ministerial task force including members from the Ministries of Correctional Services and of Health be formed to consult with prisoners, community groups, and prison staff unions while implementing our recommendations.

We also propose that the same process be undertaken at the federal level with Correctional Services Canada (CSC) and the Ministry of Health and Welfare. We urge these federal agencies to co-ordinate their response to our recommendations with the provincial task force.

## Guiding principles

Five principles inform our approach to the questions concerning HIV/AIDS in prison systems:

- Prisoners with HIV/AIDS have a basic right to maintain their health
- Prisoners have a right to protect themselves against HIV infection
- Prisoners have a right to keep their health status private. This means that (i) HIV-antibody testing should only be done anonymously, and (ii) prisoners with HIV/AIDS should be able to keep their status confidential.
- Prisoners have a right to informed consent with respect to HIV-antibody testing and HIV/AIDS treatment.
- HIV/AIDS support, education, and treatment programs should be run by "outside" community-based organizations brought into the prisons rather than by correctional staff.

Furthermore, we recognize that the diversity of the prison population requires that all HIV/AIDS programs should be sensitive to differences of race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, and mental and physical ability. Programs should be available in many languages and at varying literacy levels.

## Overview of recommendations

An HIV/AIDS policy for the prisons must address two primary issues: the pre-

vention of new HIV infection, and the care and support for those who are already infected with HIV or have AIDS. The following 36 recommendations addressing these two issues apply to the whole of the correctional system, both the men's and women's prisons. But because HIV/AIDS affects women differently than men, both physically and socially, we have also made the last four recommendations in order to address the HIV/AIDS-related needs specific to women prisoners.

We are advocating for changes in the correctional systems. This does not mean that we want to lessen the safety and security of prisons; we recognize the concerns of guards and correctional services administrators around these issues. We believe that the promotion of health in the prison population and staff are the best ways to create safety and security. When the points outlined in our brief are taken into consideration, there is no real conflict between the needs of prisoners and the needs of prison staff with respect to HIV/AIDS.

## Preventing HIV/AIDS in the prisons

HIV is transmitted through unsafe needle use and unsafe sex. Prisoners are engaging in these activities and putting themselves at risk for HIV infection because either they do not know these activities are unsafe, they do not know how to engage in them safely, or they do not have the means to engage in them safely. Comprehensive education is the first step to preventing HIV infection in the prisons.

But not only inmates need to be educated. Stopping the discrimination against those with HIV/AIDS and those engaging in behaviours associated with HIV/AIDS requires that HIV/AIDS education be directed at everyone involved with correctional systems. Therefore:

1. HIV/AIDS education should be compulsory for all inmates (male and female) and all staff providing services for incarcerated individuals (workers at the Ministry of Correctional Services and CSC such as guards, Case Management Officers, and Classification Officers; members of Correctional Officers' unions, e.g. OPSEU; Clinical Support staff; etc.).
2. Education must be comprehensive for both inmates and staff.
3. All educational presentations and materials must recognize and respond to the needs of prisoners with disabilities, from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, with varying language skills, and of different races, sexes, and sexual orientations.
4. In addition to group HIV/AIDS educational sessions, information should be made available to inmates individually upon entering and exiting the correctional facility.

In order to guarantee that information is current and to ensure that the prisoners trust those providing the education:

5. External, community-based AIDS and health organizations should lead educational sessions. Peer education should also be promoted.

Education will only be effective if prisoners have the means to act on their knowledge. The federal government has recently, if belatedly, recognized the truth of this proposition by starting a condom distribution program. Such programs must be started in provincial institutions, and all such programs must be expanded to improve distribution methods and to

include safer sex materials. Therefore:

6. Condoms, dental dams, latex gloves, appropriate lubricants, and other safer sex materials must be made available to all prisoners.

With the advent of its condom distribution plan, the federal government has acknowledged that consensual sexual activity takes place in prisons. This is not an illegal activity "outside". But because it is an institutional offense, prisoners, when having sex, are less likely to have safer sex: the extra time required is time in which they might be discovered and penalized. Accordingly:

7. Consensual sex between prisoners should not be an institutional offense.

Injection drug use is the second primary mode of HIV infection. And injection drug use is a fact of prison life that cannot be ignored. Just as safer sex education requires the distribution of safer sex materials, safer injection drug use education requires that prisoners have the means to use drugs safely. Denying inmates access to clean needles and bleach condemns them to preventable infection and illness. Thus:

8. A confidential needle exchange program should be implemented.
9. Bleach kits should be distributed in a non-identifying manner.

Needle exchange and bleach kit distribution programs outside of prisons no longer have many opponents. When people are aware that such programs make HIV easily preventable for injection drug users without, at the same time, increasing the drug use, opposition usually evaporates. To ensure that these programs do not meet opposition when implemented "inside":

10. A public relations campaign should be initiated to combat anticipated resistance by staff or the public to a needle exchange program.

Needle exchange and bleach kit distribution programs are most successful when they form part of a health model for understanding drug use. In such a model, prisoners are given information about the health consequences of continued drug use. Stopping using is identified as the healthiest option. Clean needle use is recommended for those who cannot or will not stop using. To facilitate the development of this health model:

11. Community-based workers should educate prisoners about substance use as a health issue.
12. Treatment programs for inmates with substance use concerns should be developed.

The use of unclean needles in tattooing is a third mode of HIV transmission in prisons. We suggest that:

13. Tattoo equipment and supplies should be covered under "hobby-craft"; extra safety precautions should be established.

## Care and support for prisoners with HIV/AIDS

Prisoners with HIV/AIDS die faster than those with HIV/AIDS "outside". This fact is partly the result of inadequate support services for these prisoners. They are entitled to all of the medical and support services available to people with HIV/AIDS outside of prisons. Specifically:

14. Prisoners with HIV/AIDS must be guaranteed access to medical and dental workers of their choice. In particular, they must have access to experienced and expert HIV primary care physicians.
15. The services of community-based workers serving prisoners with HIV/AIDS must be made available to all prisoners who desire them.





16. Prisoners with HIV/AIDS must have access to alternative therapies and non-approved treatments.

A prisoner with HIV/AIDS also faces situations unlike those someone with HIV/AIDS on the "outside" might have to confront. For example, a prisoner does not have control of her or his diet; or she or he might be forced to share a cell, increasing her or his exposure to opportunistic infections. To meet the special needs of a prisoner with HIV/AIDS:

17. The special dietary needs of prisoners with HIV/AIDS (because of either illness or therapeutic programs) must be met.

18. The comfort needs of prisoners with HIV/AIDS (e.g. extra clothing or blankets) must be met.

19. Prisoners with HIV/AIDS should be given sensitive, humane, and compassionate treatment when being escorted outside the prison.

Some prisoners with HIV/AIDS will be in need of practical assistance, without being so ill as to require hospitalization. In such cases:

20. Special programs must be established for prisoners with HIV/AIDS who are suffering from AIDS-related illnesses and who are ineligible for medical parole/probation.

Of course, it is best for people who have HIV/AIDS to spend as little time as possible in prison. They have better access to medical and social services on the "outside" and they are more likely to maintain their health if they remain in their communities. A sentence for someone with a life-threatening illness is qualitatively harsher

than the same sentence given to a healthy person. Reduced sentences and early releases are justifiable on humanitarian grounds. Thus:

21. Sentencing guidelines for judges and prosecutors regarding people living with HIV/AIDS need to be developed.

22. A compassionate release and/or medical parole/probation program should be developed for prisoners with HIV/AIDS.

23. HIV-related information in the possession of medical providers should be released to prison authorities only under extraordinary circumstances and only with the consent of the prisoner.

24. The confidentiality of all prisoners' HIV-antibody status (whether positive or negative) must be respected. Staff members who break the confidentiality of prisoners should be disciplined and/or fired.

25. The distribution of medications should not require a breach of the confidentiality of prisoners with HIV/AIDS.

26. Prisoners who want access to supportive counselling, medical treatment, etc., must be guaranteed that their confidentiality will be respected.

Currently it is all too common for prisoners who are known to have HIV/AIDS to be forcibly isolated. Guards, administrators, and other inmates are often under the illusion that they are safe from possible infection if all those known to be HIV-positive are segregated. Education is the best method for addressing these irrational fears:

27. Prisoners with HIV/AIDS should not be involuntarily isolated or segregated.

People outside of the prison system are able to keep their HIV status confidential because they can use the anonymous HIV-antibody testing program recently implemented by the Ontario government. This program must be expanded to include prisoners:

28. HIV-antibody testing of inmates must be done voluntarily and anonymously.

29. Testing should be carried out by "outside" community-based agencies.

When someone knows her or his HIV status, he or she is able to make decisions regarding possible medical interventions to prevent and/or delay the onset of serious illness. Prisoners will more likely choose to be tested if they know they have options should they test positive.

30. HIV-antibody testing must be accompanied by access to medical monitoring and treatment (when necessary).

A spectrum of support services should be available to prisoners with HIV/AIDS, starting at intake, throughout incarceration, and after release. Thus, HIV/AIDS issues need to be integrated into existing aftercare programs:

31. Parole Officers, Probation Officers, workers in halfway houses, and other aftercare workers must be educated about AIDS.

32. Exit kits with HIV/AIDS information, contacts with community-based organizations, condoms, bleach kits, etc. must be made available to prisoners when they are released from correctional facilities.

Any programs for prisoners with HIV/AIDS while incarcerated must continue to be available to them upon release:

33. Programs providing continuity of care after release must be established for prisoners with HIV/AIDS.

34. Any special programs used by a prisoner with HIV/AIDS must remain available to her or him outside of prison.

35. Community-based groups must be involved with the development and implementation of aftercare strategies.

36. The Ministry of Correctional Services and CSC should work with community-based HIV/AIDS housing programs and service organizations to ensure that they meet the needs of ex-prisoners.

Women prisoners and HIV/AIDS

37. Education and prevention information must be culturally sensitive and gender specific.

38. A broad range of prevention materials, addressed specifically to women, must be made available in such a way as to protect prisoners' confidentiality.

39. Women with HIV/AIDS must have access to appropriate treatments and hospital care.

40. Women with HIV/AIDS must have access to "outside" resources such as counsellors and facilitators who are culturally and ethnically appropriate.

The National Incarcerated Muslim Network - Update

Bismi Lhāhi-Rahmāni-r-Rahīm  
Yassir 'Abd-al-Malik-at-Talib-ad-Din  
c/o Maurice Taylor #476837  
Rt. 3 Box 59  
Rosharon, Tx. 77583

Update:  
A 'ūdhu-billahi-min-ash-shaytani-r-raġīm  
I seek refuge with Allah from the rejected satan

Raditu billāhi rabba wa bil Islami dīna  
wa bi Muhammadin nabīyyanw wa rasūla.

I accept Allāh as Lord and Al-Islam as the Religion and Muhammad as Prophet and Messenger.

As-salaaamu 'Alaykum  
Dear Believers and Brothers & Sisters,

In my last article was the call for pledges of co-operation. Al-hamdu lillāh many did make pledges and is recorded for further use when NIMN is financially able to export the ESSP program.

However, our only stipulation is that one believe in Allāh (swt) His Prophet and the basic tenets of Al-Islam not what sect you belong to.

I would like to send thanks to the Ikhwan (Brother) in New Jersey for his financial help - shukran wa hamdu lillāh and Qaiser Waraich for his financial help - shukran wa hamdu lillāh. The above was a true show of Islamic belief and brotherhood.

However, we are not receiving the type of assistance we need to move out of the infancy stage of our development of ESSP (economic support system program).

Thus, this is what I propose. Letters to the following Islamic institutions as a means of cultivating co-operation

Muslim Journal  
c/o Ms. Ayesha Mustafaa

910 W. Van Buren, Suite 100  
Chicago, IL 60607

Nemat International, Inc.  
147 Danbury Rd. #16  
New Milford, CT 06776

Issue & Views  
c/o Ms. Elizabeth Wright  
P.O. Box 467  
New York, NY 10025

Wasjid Waritheen  
c/o Imam Rasheed Shabazz  
Prison Service Co-ordinator  
1652 47th Ave.  
Oakland, CA 94601

Mercants of Nubia  
1007 Walker St.  
Houston, TX 77057

Zakiyyah's Books & Gifts  
3101 Curt's Circle  
Grand Prairie, TX 75051

Marilyn's Gift Gallery  
818 E. Elm Ave.  
Waco, TX 76704

Books & Things  
U.S. Flea Market, Booth #196  
Fayetteville, NC 28303

Ghani Traders, Inc.  
Bayside Merchandise Mart 150-160  
Mt. Vernon St. #486  
Dorchester, MA 02125

The following is data that can be used when writing these institutions. On the subject of the Muslim population in America, page 26 of The American Muslim by Dr. Fareed Nu'Man of the American Muslim Council of Washington, D.C.

In paragraph two he states; "There are an estimated 5 to 8 million Muslims currently in the United States, and by the year 2010, if present trends continues, (what are the present trends? We shall see later) that number will double to 10 to 16 million.

There is no question that [Al] Islam is alive and growing in America. Dr. John R. Weeks, Director of International Population Center, San Diego State University, noted demographer and author of The Demography of Islamic Nations, states: "There can be no question that the Muslim population in this country is large and is growing at a fairly rapid pace. The estimated rate of conversion to [Al] Islam among Americans is 135,000 per year (35,000 of this number come from those who are incarcerated (or 26%). The contributing factors to our growth rate are immigration, propagation and fertility."

Third paragraph: "The conversion of Americans is the highest in correctional institutions (26% in prison) and in the inner cities." The truth is that the highest conversion rate is among prisoners from the inner cities.

The Muslim experience is researched in three categories: immigrants, American converts, and those of both groups. The ethnic percentages are:

African-Americans (Prisoners)	26%
African-Americans	16%
South Asian (Indian sub-cont.)	24.4%
Arab	12.4%
African	5.2%
Persian	3.6%
Turkish	2.4%
Southeast Asian	2%
American Whites	1.6%
Albanian	.8%
All other groups	5.6%

Fourth paragraph: "The ten states with the most concentrated Muslim population are

1-California	6-Michigan
2-New York	7-Virginia
3-Illinois	8-Texas
4-New Jersey	9-Ohio
5-Indiana	10-Maryland"

Fifth paragraph: "There are more than 1,000 Masjid (an average of 20 Masjids per state), 400 Islamic schools... over 400 associations (8 per state), an estimated 200,000 businesses (4,000 per state)..."

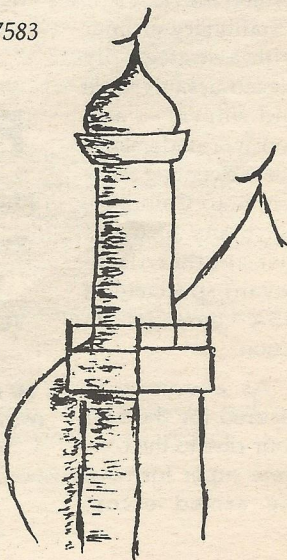
Conclusion: the incarcerated Muslim have the highest conversion rate 26% but from my experience and what I have surveyed it is not due to the propagational efforts by the outside American Islamic Ummat. Also, we have no means of economic source to establish Zakat which means that there is no means in which we can propagate Al-Islam economically nor further our understanding of it through the use of books.

Not to mention answering to the needs of indigent prisoners hygienic needs, the formation of legal and political groups and associations that would put the issues of the prisoners before the misled general public.

The mayors, governors, senators, congressmen and presidents of this country do not have the interest of the masses, nor the common prisoner, and certainly not the incarcerated Muslims interest at heart.

We, the incarcerated Muslims must make certain that the Imāms (Islamic leaders) from our communities represent us with more than lip service. But at any rate, we do not have them to blame - only ourselves for not banding together for a common cause - Fee Sabillāh!

Hizbullāh  
Maurice Taylor #476837  
Rt. 3 Box 59  
Rosharon TX 77583





# ADX-Florence: isolation is the cornerstone

*Prisoners at the new control unit describe conditions and their first impressions in letters from Florence. The following is a compilation of excerpts from letters that describe the realities of this new and improved prison. -ed*

"Once again the FEDBOP has managed to create the flagship of concrete superstructures in the hope of deterring the widespread violence that permeates the federal prison system. Just a half hour away from Colorado Springs, nestled on 600 acres of rugged terrain, rises a dominating concrete complex known as ADX Florence. At first glance this group of concrete structures contradicts the rugged beauty of the Colorado foothills. As one gets closer it is immediately noticeable — just another prison, one of several tucked away in the Colorado foothills. Prisons that are a welcomed sight for depressed communities. Most importantly, Florence, Co. also houses the new and improved FEDBOP control unit. Marion has now relinquished its foreboding omnipresence and curiosities to that of ADX Florence. One who is confined within this concrete superstructure automatically realizes that all the mistakes and oversights made at Marion have been corrected at ADX.

To the average transplant from Marion who hasn't been in the free world for years, the sudden transition is overwhelming to the senses. Sitting on a bus, manacled next to a suited, ready-for-battle escort, we are hustled under motorcade escort to a remote air force base outside St. Louis. Many are silent, looking into a free world and beautiful scenery that will soon only be a memory. As the rumbling of the vehicle wheels reverberate our enclosure the reminiscing of what once was and to many will never be. It is a disheartening reality check, the world hasn't changed much and all we do is pass through until freedom comes upon arrival to Scott Air Force Base." -DV

"Before dawn a crew of cops rousted me from my sleep ...We went to the airport in a six vehicle caravan - I counted a dozen SWAT cops. There were more at the airport. And a little Lear jet waiting. -TM

"A 737 idles on the sidebar with a stairwell protruding from its rear — like a monster ready to devour its prey. The perimeter is cordoned off with armed personnel prepared for just about anything. Each one briefed on the unlikely scenario to the most general. Many of us realize whatever takes place, they have orders to shoot us first then take care of business. As the two buses move closer to the airlift our personal escorts move into position. If any prisoners want to check-out permanently — now is the perfect opportunity. But even those doing forever and a day hang on to some obscure realization that they will be free — and only concern themselves with whether or not we will be given a sack-lunch on the airlift.

As the 737 descends Colorado Springs comes into view. The majestic strength and beauty of snow capped mountains brings a moment of troops wielding AR-15s and dressed like something out of a D rated Rambo movie. Picture a hostage situation in a stationary airliner with a strategically placed assault force and snipers — and you will understand our welcoming committee to Colorado. For many of us it's just another flamboyant spectacle of USA gestapo in action.

As everyone is secured for the half hour ride to the concrete super fortress, the armed escort

takes their assigned positions. The buses move out cautiously to rendezvous with the Co. Springs P.D. and the circus begins. Sirens, flashing lights and cordoned off access roads. This is all sprinkled with the intimidation of an assault troop vehicle. To the average citizen it was worth stopping their vehicles and rolling down the windows to look on in fascination. All together enough assault power to give two infantry groups a good fight. Yet, what prisoner here could even organize an assault, shit, 95% of them can't afford a carton of camels let alone expenses for an escape. Of course officials are aware of this, but it's all part of a larger contingency and psychological operations of FEDBOP. A picture speaks louder than words and in this case people of Co. Springs will remember for awhile how the so called worst of the worst passed through their area... not to mention the miles of video tape that will be used as "training material" when it comes time to confine revolutionary attitudes in concentration camps." - DV

"First thing I saw was the maximum security camp with its New Age veneer that houses corrupt politicians, thieving public officials, embezzlers and probably a significant number of snitches. Next we pass by the medium security FCI which is not quite so art deco but no assault on the senses either. You know you're getting warm as you pass by the maximum security USP with its multitude of fences, rolls of razor wire and gun towers. We proceed to the literal end of the line, for both the compound and the federal prison system -Administrative Maximum." -RL

"All in all, this place is not worse than most of us had supposed it would be. The guards and prisonrats are all hyped up with their grossly exaggerated important roles in oppressing us so-called worst of the worst predatory animals." -JB

"Through the maze it became disorienting. Can't see outside. I'm in here and everything else is out there somewhere. Took me a few days to figure out the configuration of the cell-block. Twelve cells per tier, three tiers per block, over and under. The cells are sound resistant, i.e., they're designed to suppress human sound. There really is an echo in the cell when you speak (which isn't often unless you want to talk to yourself). A cough sounds like a racket ball carom.

**Isolation appears to be the cornerstone of ADX. One underlying purpose is to inflict enough psychological pain and sensory deprivation to have prisoners desperate for transfer elsewhere. It won't work for any constructive end, but that's besides the point." - RL**

"In truth, prisoners here, as in Marion, are basically no worse than those in any tough seg-block in the country. A small percentage are brain-damaged by any measurement, some others have set themselves up to hide.

But most prisoners here and in any tough cell blocks nationwide are resisters — known to prisonrats as troublemakers, or even spookier, potential troublemakers. These are the convicts who tried or talked about escaping, or who resisted oppressive work or housing conditions by talking strike or

passing around a petition. Other resisters or troublemakers are the jail-house lawyers who are an awful thorn in the side of prisonrats. Seg blocs everywhere, just as in this maxi monument, are filled with men who resisted with a weapon against being robbed or otherwise degraded by their more desperate neighbours. Or who resisted goon squad prison guards. Others in here resisted the oppressive boredom by concocting schemes to get high. Some even had the luck to come across someone who betrayed them. Others, not a few, are here direct from courts. For the most part, these resisters are the men, the condemned, the troublemakers if you will, who will comprise the population of this new maxi prison. Rule-breakers for sure, but morally repugnant?

This Colorado joint is excessively restrictive. It seems geared to do exactly what Marion has done for years; bring out the worst potential of those it forces into its dungeons. The expressed plan is to break our spirit. The intention of the BOP is totally isolate the troublemakers and make us wholly dependent for everything on the whim and pleasure of the unsmiling uniformed guard. We'll survive though. Or at least the toughest of us will.

There are no orderlies allowed onto the small 12-cell ranges. No passing, no sharing of anything from con to con — not even anything as harmless (and authorized) as a Christmas card.

Once we are broken in and munching on the mental lollipops (TV, Bingo football) the next contingents will be brought in. There will be sizeable percentage of political prisoners too, and neighbourhood survivors with huge time for routine drug deals — and we expect the atmosphere here to get more grim." - JB

**The sun shines every day and I'm still delighted to be away from Marion. But this joint is too repressive, too uptight to not create problems. -JB**

"We now come to the new and improved FEDBOP version of real confinement. A fortified concrete monolith set away from the normalcy of Florence complex. Upon entry one automatically feels the foreboding and omnipresence of control. This eventually dissipates as one accustoms himself to his new surroundings. In a suspicious kind of way the cells are designed with some semblance of humanistic overtures and as far as control unit living conditions go — it is quite comfortable. For the real convicts here, the peacefulness and solitude is welcomed. Because ADX is a new facility there is a scrutiny unsurpassed and practically every movement is under the proverbial microscope. Each and every official takes the upmost caution in their business with ADX. There is apprehensiveness, caution and extreme attentiveness among all staff. However, for many of the Marion crowd the attention and gratuities are all quite confounding. Much emphasis has been put on interpersonal relationships between staff and prisoner. Many of the prisoner's needs are being met and with very little contempt from the unit teams. Overall the attitudes and services displayed by the officials here are that of wonderment. I have surmised that no-one wants a replay of Marion's tragedies — and it is in everyone's best interests to meet what adversities there are with professional approaches. It is quite evident to many that ADX is much more tolerable than Marion — and I would definitely agree." DV

"In the actual physical plant, it's about what we expected. On the other hand there is an ultra-politeness that I've never seen with screws before." -TM

"Tommy could not help cracking up to see how anxiously polite and accommodating and apologetically human the guards were in regard to our visit" -BM

"There is the isolation but we do rec with others a few times a week - no runners yet though, they keep promising to pick

one. They asked me if I wanted the job. I refused. ... Being a runner would put me out there in all the politics and bullshit." -TM

There are two half-court sized rec yards where a tier at a time can rec. Two individual "outside" rec pits which are rooms with open tops covered in chainlink (as are the other rec yards) surrounded by 20' concrete walls with one-way mirror windows And eight indoor single rec rooms. All rec spaces have chin-up/dip apparatus.

The cop to prisoner ratio, when the place is full will be two cops to every three prisoners. So now while we are at one-tenth capacity, 13 cops showed up to move me from an indoor rec area to my cell. Every time we are moved within the unit we're cuffed through the foodport behind our backs, held onto the whole way. Thoroughly pat-searched (sometimes stripped) and gone over with a metal detector.

Effects of conditions: tendency toward lethargy, forgetfulness, inability to concentrate, insomnia, dozing during day. Very edgy towards guards!" -T.M.

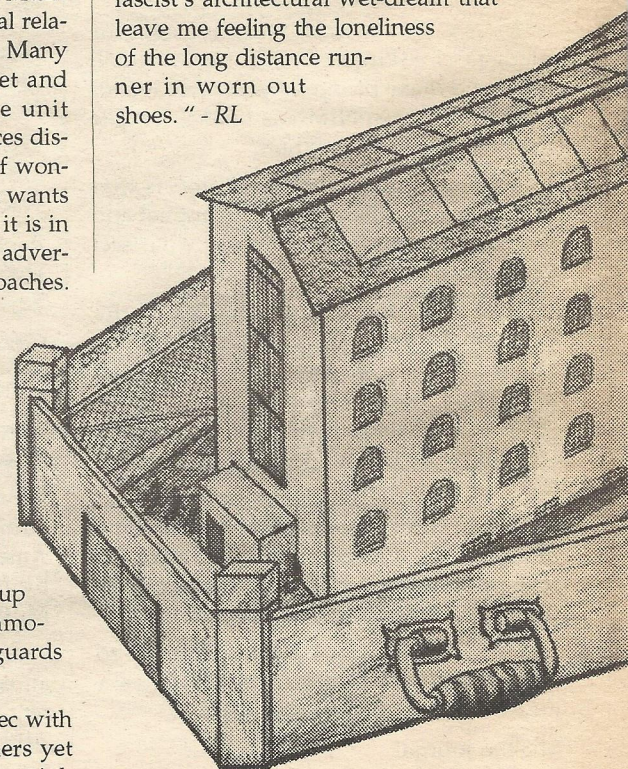
**"The screws on us are tightening" -JB**

"You get a standard b+w idiot box. First time I snapped it on I see the face of Flush Rush Limbaugh spread across the screen. An Omen? I got a concrete bunk, felt strip mattress and steel toilet. One newbie is the telephone-booth-sized shower in the cell. Water comes out in 90-second sprays that makes me feel like a house plant. The outer door is solid steel with a peephole panel of Plexiglass. Through this door is a small trap of dead space, then a second door of steel bars. Can't see left nor right-only the wall across from the cell. Meals are in the cell. Lots of strip searches and cell shakedowns. All movement is in restraints. Isolation appears to be the cornerstone of ADX.

This yellow-ribbon war on crime is about money and power. Who profits and who suffers. Corrections used to be the bottom feeders slowly but steadily eating their relatively small portion of taxpayers' dollars. No more. Today we have this huge swine with its snout deeply embedded in the public trough. Liberals and closet fascists make noise about money spent on Aid to Families with Dependent Children while enormous sums are thrown into a bottomless rathole called corrections.

The only program I'm currently in is sleep deprivation with the constant clanging and banging on electronic doors throughout the night as well as the periodic flashlight beam in the face and cacophony of idle guards. It sometimes feels like the methamphetamine boogie.

This is the first time I've occupied a virgin cell. No one has lived in this cell before. I've never had a new house, new apartment or new car, but now I've got a new cell. There's something about occupying a proto-techno-fascist's architectural wet-dream that leave me feeling the loneliness of the long distance runner in worn out shoes." - RL



## FLORENCE FACTS

**Florence complex cost: \$150 million**

**Prison payroll annually: \$44 million**

**168 video surveillance cameras**

**700-900 new permanent jobs at its four prisons**

**10 miles from contaminated uranium mine, risking contamination of water.**

**Count every 30 minutes at night**



# Torture in Conecticut's first super-max

My life went from the eye of the storm to the outer perimeter when on March 13, 1995 I was transfered to Connecticut's first super-max. Though it is called "Northern Correctional Institution", it is the furthest thing from correctional. This is part of Governor Rowland's and the Newt Right's idea of getting tough on prisoners. First they cut them off systematically from family and friends, and then once out of view of the public's scrutiny, they torture and brutalize them.

My first eight hours here were spent (4-pointed) chained naked to a metal bed, forced to urinate on myself while cold freezing air blew on me, all because I would not allow myself to be degraded by lying face down on a filthy dirty concrete floor, while fully chained — an order that served no legitimate penealogical purpose.

As soon as the van I arrived in stopped in the Sally Port, I was approached by 10 or more black-glove-wearing goons, barking orders at me. This one redneck put his nasty ass gloved hand over my mouth. I tried to bite him as I could do nothing else because I was in leg irons, belly chain, and handcuffs. They dragged me to a holding cell. This one white-shirt-wearing german put a pressure-point hold on the side of my neck, while one cop twisted my wrist causing extreme pain. They forced me to the floor, while one pig put his foot on my head. They ordered me not to get up, but my sense of human dignity would not allow me of my own free will to participate in this attempt to degrade me. Each time they released me I attempted to get up and they would slam me back down,

until they relented and eventually backed out of the cell, leaving me chained.

When they came back they barked at me, "Inmate, get on the floor face down!". I would not, so they sprayed me with pepper-mace. I still would not go down, so they maced me again and again and again, eventually running out, I was by this time blind and could no longer see or breathe. They bum rushed me with the shield, slamming it into me with the force of nine hundred pounds. Their intent was to cause as much pain as possible.

They threw me to the floor, twisting my limbs in directions the human body was not intended to go, ripping my clothes off me in a frenzy, like sharks feeding, stating "Stop resisting inmate!". This is done to justify the acts of near-breaking of your limbs, each pig twisting a hand, arm, or leg in a different direction, while the entire incident is filmed by a female with a handycam.

They carried me to some water, and under the pretense of washing the mace out of my eyes they tried to drown me, while yelling, "stop resisting, inmate". They put a jump suit on me, which fell to my ankles as they then dragged me down these long hallways, with both male and female officers viewing my naked condition, reminiscent of the Mandingo slave being sold on the auction block, subhuman, so there is no need to clothe you as a human being. All the while they were twisting my wrist and thumb, hurting me as they dragged me along the entire length of the hallway.

They four-pointed me to a metal slab, this

being the ultimate torture — being forced to lie in the freezing cold, urinating on yourself, naked. The psychological torture comes in many forms — you are deprived of sleep, as the goons wake you every 15 minutes, slamming doors. If that doesn't wake you they bang on your door and then you are forced to have a bright light shining in your face.

I was unable to eat for the first 4 or 5 days, because they only would serve meat and I am a vegetarian. They announce chow over a loudspeaker, telling you to stand at your door; "If you are not standing you don't eat." If you are standing they yell, "Step away from the door, Inmate" You sit on your bed, then they place the tray on the slot, and bark, "Come and get it." The warden was reported to have said, "Before an inmate leaves this super-max, he will submit to authority."

I fear for my personal safety — you have a situation which reflects a fascist concentration camp, in a developing police state, with the threat of physical assault looming over your head if you resist or fail to submit... Word to the mother, I refuse to ever submit to such tyranny. Revolution is the only solution. And it is really a blessing in disguise to be under attack...Mao Tse Tung said, "To be attacked by the enemy is a good thing, not a bad thing."

It is chic for politicians to be tough on crime, but is it really in the public's interest to allow these places to become soulless wastelands? The employees become desensitized to the value of life and their children learn by example. And what do they teach those who have broken their so-called law? They torture us by keeping us in a perpetual state of hunger and coldness, forcing us to take showers with hand cuffs, and then to walk back to the cell nude, unable to cover

oneself with the cuffs on.

I cannot discuss the above without expounding upon the racist aspects of it: the prison population is 95 percent New Afrikan and Spanish, yet the guard force is 97 percent white, and the supervisory positions are 98 percent white. And they function on their own exclusive ideology (racial supremacy, hegemony, sexism and homophobia) characteristic of nazi germany, fascism, and imperial democracy. Many view themselves to be above the law because they operate in clandestine mode, outside of the public's view, having to answer only to themselves, which allows them to cover up any misconduct.

In closing I have tried to tell the story of one of us, I request that letters of inquiry be sent to the following because these renegades need to know that the people are watching.

Your in Struggle, La Luta continues. As-Salaam Alaikum, Wa Rahatullah,

Robin "Zakia" Elliot #24941 N.C.I.

Box 665

Somers, CT 06071

Write:

Commissioner Armstrong

340 Capital Ave.

Hartford, CT 06106

and:

Warden Kupec/Mays

Northern Correctional Institution

Box 665

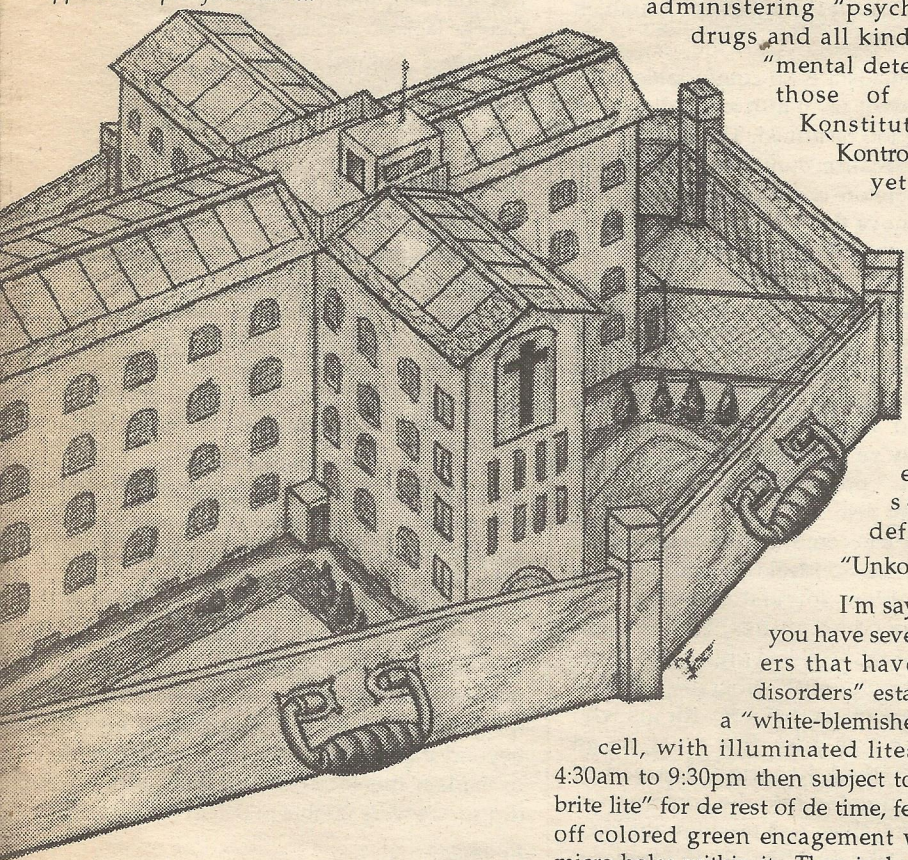
Somers, CT 06071

Ask them —

1. Why the macing?
2. Why are we handcuffed in the shower?
3. Why no heat?
4. Why do officers wear black gloves?
5. Why are we kept hungry?

## ADX-Florence cont'd.

Prisoners at Florence continue to report on transfers to fill ADX, the conditions they are adapting to and the increasingly repressive measures of the BOP. It is as though administrators have realized that the violent and abusive nature of prisons will no longer be accepted. Their response to criticism is a new model to warehouse and 'correct' their charges. New model prisons have control units in full swing at places like Pelican Bay, CA, Wabash IN, MCI Greene in PA and ADX Florence in Colorado. The psychological torture of such repressive measures makes it necessary for the anti-prison movement to unite to shut down control unit prisons and oppose their proliferation. -ed



## Chemical warfare in Indiana control unit

As i sat inside a "windowless" tomb... Yeah anotha Kontrol Kamp, this one being located in Carlisle, IN — duplicated design of "Pelican Bay" — titled Wabash Valley "Shu-Unit".

De public keeps "dodging" them, and de government keeps "building" them. Such dreary pro-KKKonstitutional Kamps used to house de so-called "worst-of-de-worst", etc.,etc. Possibly de public is failing to understand that these "prisoncrats" are administering "psycho-tropic" drugs and all kinds of other

mental deterrents" to those of us they Konstitute "UnKontrolable", and yet hasn't given a

knowledgeable or sensible definition of "Unkontrolable".

I'm saying that if you have several prisoners that have "mental disorders" established in a "white-blemished walled" cell, with illuminated lites on from 4:30am to 9:30pm then subject to a "night-brite lite" for de rest of de time, featuring an off colored green encagement with 5,700 micro-holes within it.. Then include a ventilation system that blows out "dusty-muggy air" — allowing it to be extremely hot upstairs yet cold downstairs, setting-up de atmosphere to have high tension and confu-

sion amongst de "Konfined". Faulty plumbing — where as when you flush your toilet de "waste" comes up in de adjoining cell's toilet.

"Confusion" de "main order"... mixing de "mentally disordered" amongst those of us that's trying to hold on to our "psychological strength", with de "prisoncrats" threatening to unleash "chemical warfare" for de least reasons, i.e. making so-called excessive noise. Yet in order to get de pigs attention, in "pod-Kontrol" or otherwise, we have to yell, scream and bang on de doors (cages), sometimes to no avail, other times resulting in getting "sprayed" — "stripped-out" and placed in "4-point restraints"; Wouldn't "you" think de atmosphere is set-up to be "Konstituted UnKKKontrollable"?

Not only that...but we are served small portions of processed food — (food cooked several days in advance, reheated then served), a lot of unedible food items i.e. half-cooked and/or scorched food. i, since coming from M.C.C. in Aug. 94 to Wabash, have lost 11 lbs. De medical attention is poor, if you need to see a doctor, because of medical reasons, no matter how serious, you may see him as soon as anotha week or two. De nurses aren't allowed to pass out or give any medicine remedy, until de doctor sees de prisoner and prescribes such remedy. Otherwise we have to purchase "over-the-counter-meds" from commissary, at high prices...i.e. 100 tylenol; \$5.61, 24 Chlortrimeton; \$7.43, etc., wash clothes (state issue)--63 cents, all this and other necessities where there is no "state-pay" issued, resulting in many indigent prisoners going without.

De media dubs "us" criminals, menaces 2 society, etc. i don't dispute that de rate of "crime activities" are "dangerously high". But, i dispute-how is these types of "environmental kamps" going to us realize that we are making mistakes and assisting de

destruction of de communities, etc. especially when we are subjugated to "psychological deterioration". De media doesn't relay to de "public" that "prisoncrats/pigs" misuse their authoritative position to take out their frustration, avengement, etc.

Here at "Wabash" there's a high form of "racial tension", pigs who haven't been brought up or around de "Afrikan descendants" and everything to them is "discipline" and embedded disapproval of skin color. Then they are "brain trained washed" that they have to "out manipulate us", "discipline us", "subdue us" and "break us", etc. Craig Hanks (superintendent) says we "...are nothing but convicts". i wonder, since Hanks is Euro-Amerikan and Wabash has in its clutches, over half de population being of Afrikan descent, could that be a symbolic statement to "...We are only 3/5 human beings," once established in de declaration of independence clause?!

Such things i ask de "public" to think about, and ask question about, not just ask de "prisoncrats", and/or "government officials", but ask "us" (prisoners) and when de facts are put out in front of you and things aren't adding up...then "we" need de "public" to assist "us" in protest/support against these "Konditions" inside these "KKKontrol Kamps".

I further conclude this article, asking those of you who have some concern for anotha human beings life, etc. and/or wanting to know more about "Wabash Valley" contact de following:

s/n Christopher Lee (Ayice Lasana) #902540

P.O. Box 1111

Carlisle, IN 47838

Protest against such treatment and/or ask questions of de prisoncrats contact:

Craig Hanks (superintendent)

P.O. Box 500

Carlisle, IN 47838



# Neo-Colonialism: the conquest continues

"The productive New Afrikan Nation's polar opposite was the 'United States', which from its inception was a criminal society of parasites. This isn't racism we're talking about. The u.s.a. was a specific type of nation, a white settler empire: a nation whose male citizens were imported garrison for an invading euro-capitalist; a nation whose only territory is the land they conquered and cleared by genocide; a nation that is really an empire containing many captive nations on the continent and abroad. And lastly, a nation whose race knowingly agreed to be oppressors and mass murders in return for a higher standard of living and the "right" to be parasitic on other peoples. This is what shaped the content of their character as a civilization." (NightVision)

New and improved ways of national oppression were implemented over one hundred years ago with the hoax of "Reconstruction." And it is from this point that We should begin Our study of the colonialism that is prefixed with "neo". We don't want to fall for the misleading conception that "Neo" means *now*, as if only in Our lifetime, or having begun four or five years ago — or even in the early seventies when the bourgeoisie appointed a slew of black-amerikan mayors to oversee urban centers in an attempt to forestall the rise of consciousness. This, of course, was the result of an overstanding that the state had reached by studying the "Feed the People" Survivalist Programs of the Black Panther Party. This initiative towards self-determination was viewed much like the Nation of Islam and the Universal Negro Improvement Association before it — with total alarm. This is the same alarm that prompted the national bourgeoisie to implement "Reconstruction." Well if this is the case, and We believe that it is, then We must begin Our study of this "new and improved" form of colonialism from 1865. Otherwise We'll miss important developments that are connected to, and have assisted in, the continued success of neo-colonialism.

"Today's revolutionary need is to detox ourselves from the old stereotyped political formulas from 20 or 30 years ago, without which we cannot deal with neo-colonialism."

It stands to reason that to effectively overstand, confront, and eradicate a *new* problem, We are going to have to equip Ourselves with a *new* theory that can practically applicate methods strategically designed to do so. The strategy of colonialism has not changed in the least. That is to say, that, the intended goal of subjugating the nation's productive forces for profits remain intact — why else are nations creat-

ed and colonized? However, the *tactics* implemented to maintain control have been drastically altered to give the unconscious colonial subject the illusion of freedom. Neo-colonialism is paradoxically capable of being both anti-racist and anti-colonial. It is perhaps the most calculatingly confusing tactic utilized by the national bourgeoisie.

Which is why We are still trying to grapple with its multi-faceted implementation. Increasingly, neo-colonialism is pushing ahead with hard-hitting tactics that create

the illusory image of self as worst enemy. True to its genocidal character, these tactics are varied and unavoidably pervasive throughout the oppressed nations of New Afrika, Puerto Rico, Aztlan and Native nations. Neo-colonialism flexes to include a Black Amerikan as the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff and contracts him to be the point man in their terrorist campaign against the renegade neo-colony of Iraq, which had invaded another of their neo-colonies — Kuwait. Neo-colonialism flexes to appoint Black-americans in positions of everything from judges to governors, from police chiefs to surgeon generals. It sets up COINTELPRO sub-tactics, under such names as "Frumenschen" (German, meaning "Primitive Man"—see "Witch Hunt" by Mary A. Fischer, in the Dec. 93 issue of GQ) to solicit these appointees for bribes from the FBI so that it can prove the inability of these Black-americans to be "upstanding incorruptible citizens". We find this in the aforementioned article:

"scores of other black American politicians have been targets of government probes, especially during the 1980s. Among them were Georgia State Legislator Julian Bond; Maryland State Senator Clarence Mitchell III; Federal Judge Alecee Hastings; Congressmen Ron Dellums, Floyd Flake, Harold Ford, Mervyn Dymally, John Conyers, Charles Rangel, William Clay and William Gray; And Mayors Coleman Young, David Dinkins, Harold Washington and of course, Marion Barry. These men were the objects of such tactics as surveillance, buggings, wiretaps, IRS audits, compromised informants, media leaks and grand jury manipulations."

Neo-colonialism hides cleverly behind such slogans as "Be All that You Can Be", "Rock the Vote" and "Just Say No." Being "all that you can be" has nothing to do with *you*. *You* are used to aid the bourgeoisie in being "all that it can be" — which includes your subjugation. We are made to believe

that joining the colonial military will enhance the strength and knowledge of self. And that otherwise We'll *never* be all that We can be. On the Black Entertainment Television Network there is even a rap version of this commercial targeted specifically at the unconscious colonial youth who feel trapped by circumstances previously created by the same neo-colonialism. Well, after the appointment of so many neo-colonial Blacks, it becomes "necessary" for the New Afrikan masses to vote for "their people." So neo-colonialism flexes again to popularize the slogan "Rock the Vote". Usually they'll confront the unconscious colonial

## Neo-colonialism hides cleverly behind such slogans as "Be All that You Can Be", "Rock the Vote" and "Just Say No."

subject with the old, "This is why Martin Luther King died, so you can vote and make a difference." The youth, after having been guilt ridden by the misleading propaganda concerning King, begin to parrot the catchy slogan and some even go to vote, innocently believing they are making a difference. And, in a way, they are: The difference is between the legality and illegality of the u.s. settler nation.

Once the "national emergency" became crack in the mid-eighties, the slogan, conceptualized by neo-colonial tacticians and propagated by Nancy Reagan as "just say no." After PCP ("angel dust") failed to knock down enough New Afrikans in the urban centers and subsequently create a division of haves (dealers) and have-nots (users/non-users/dealers), crack was introduced and popularized as the "drug of choice." Once enough people had been strung out and a clear economic division had been created, in came the media and out came the slogan, "just say no." Create the conditions, supply the substance, encourage the competitors, condemn the abusers, repress the communities, imprison the "curb servers", exploit the situation with media coverage and then instruct the masses to "just say no." This is neo-colonialism, where the curb-server is blamed by all for being the perpetrator to genocide, while the originator of the suffering comes across as being the "problem solver." So while being anti-people in one instance, neo-colonialism can "switch reels" and put on its pro-people face, as well. The masses become confused by this because while not necessarily being pro-government, they are anti-narcotics. And in the absence of a righteous vanguard, or the ability to create one, the people end up supplying the state with intelligence on dealers. Neo-colonialism thus wins twice.

Neo-colonialism is so comfortable in its ability to outwit us, that it even allows for the colonized to be armed. The reason i say "allow" is because they manufacture the guns and therefore control their flow. In this way, We remove the "irony" out of the fact that the most economically depressed sections

of the empire are also the drug and murder capitals (Detroit, D.C., L.A., Gary, Ft. Worth, etc). Now that We are beginning to sift through some of their illusions and Re-Build our Movement, they've implemented a "guns for gifts" program. So in two strokes they are: 1) disarming the New Afrikan communities; 2) giving the masses an ideal of them being the problem solvers once again for Our communities. Never mind that the so-called organizers of the "guns for gifts" programs are New Afrikans and Puerto Ricans who stand to lose the most in an unarmed situation. Instead of them going into the communities themselves and teaching the people responsibility about weapons' use, they join ranks with the state to disarm the people. This is neo-colonialism, when Our own sides with the enemy to disarm us — What happens when Our nation

must confront the beast? We'll be throwing rocks and bottles at tanks like the Palestinians and the Azanians.

We've got to overstand the complexities of neo-colonialism where the most reactionary elements of the empire are leading the charge against racism (as if that has ever been our most pressing problem) and the Salvation Army is leading the revolution.

Neo-colonialism has been successful in part for three reasons: First of all, they've found some willing participants, collaborators, stooges. Those who We used to call "Uncle Toms." Now the family has gotten bigger and there are Aunt Jemimas too. Without the willing participation of these folks, neo-colonialism could not have evolved into "neo"-colonialism. Neo-colonialism is a reciprocal system. That is, it works with a partner, without whom it could not so easily disguise itself among the people. Secondly, after having found enough crime partners to willingly push its genocidal line, neo-colonialism has to shift the allure of power from its self-proclaimed inflexible institutions to the new and improved administrations of choice. These, of course, are the faithful crime partners of the state who have superimposed themselves on Our lives, have proclaimed themselves to be Our leaders.

"Follow us," they say, while leading us directly into the pocket of the great enemy of humankind. The shift — which is a shift only in symbolism — becomes necessary when the state, itself, is incapable of persuading the oppressed into any substantially willing partnership in their own subjugation. Out come the "leaders" with massive grants from major multinational corporations to subtly move the oppressed masses towards an endless labyrinth of meaningless reform, thus prolonging the rise in collective consciousness and therefore revolution. Thirdly, neo-colonialism banks on the chaotic disunity of the revolutionary organizations that if consolidated under the Front for the Liberation of the New Afrikan Nation (FROLINAN) could, in fact, win the minds of the masses to shake the beast. And the fact that some of Our most skilled organizers and would-be vanguard elements are Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War, has little to do with the disarray of Our National Organizations. The struggle continues regardless of terrain. Nothing don't change but tactics. The actual fact of the matter is, Our knowledge of this phenomenon — neo-colonialism — is inadequate, and it has, to a large degree, outwitted us. Now, however, We need to re-evaluate Our political theories to fit accordingly with this neo-development. Dig what Comrade George Jackson said over 20 years ago:

"After revolution has failed, all questions must center on *how* a new revolutionary consciousness can be mobilized...at which level of social, political and economic life should we begin Our new attack?" (Blood In My Eye, pp. 117)

We say this at the level of overstanding the chameleon-like tactics of neo-colonialism. 'Cause, "if you don't overstand neo-colonialism, everything else will just confuse you." We'll close this out like We began, with a passage from Butch Lee and Red Rover's *Night-Vision* (Vagabond Press, 1993)

"Until we put some light on the change from a colonial to a neo-colonial world, We are locked in cycles of primitive rebellion. We are not saying "primitive" like imperialist culture does, as a racist term implying backward and inferior, but in the true sense of those who came first, the stage that is the start of things. It took the oppressed generations to understand euro-imperialist civilization in its colonial form. To move beyond the primitive theories we first had to explain the social world. And until we did so, we were unable to defeat it." ∞

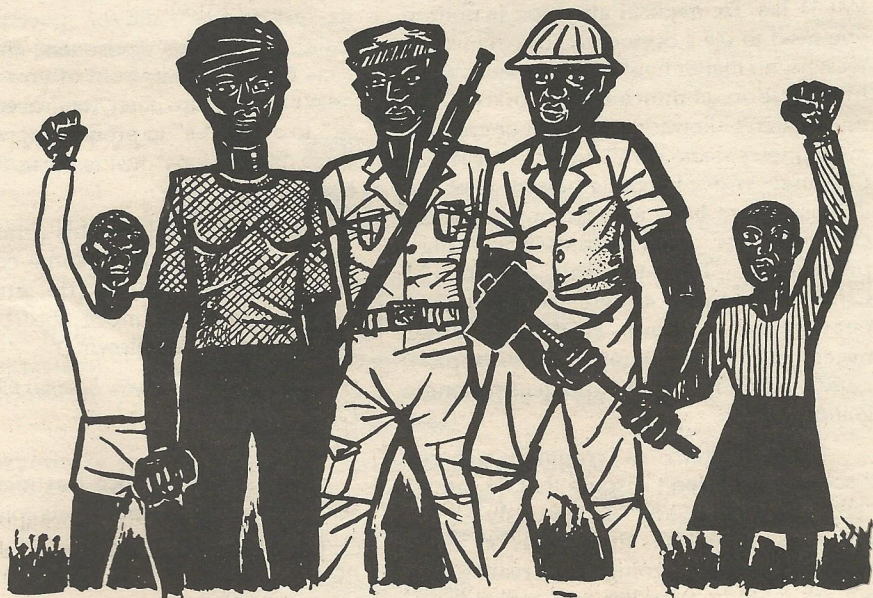
Re-Build!

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Also published in *Crossroad*





# Scrambling to combat genocide

Most prisoners are currently attempting to scramble out of harm's way (some better than others depending on their mental and material resources) as best they can given the growing repression of state prisoncrats. This scrambling increasingly manifests itself in a variety of negative ways: 1) psychologically, 2) emotionally, 3) chemically, and 4) violently. All of which is derived from an even more acute sense of hopelessness now being felt by many prisoners. In addition, it is important to point out that what We as prisoners are experiencing is part of a larger dialectic of interconnected scrambling and struggle from as well as within mainstream society. That is to say, people in prison don't arrive here via the moon. We come from society where in many cases, We had families, held jobs, had friends, participated in community activities and generally experience the same violent ups and downs of kapitalist society like everyone else. So it goes from society to prison.

People in general have a difficult task ahead of them. However, this task becomes doubly difficult for people in prison. Having been born into a kapitalist "busted class", the vast majority of prisoners at some point in their lives were forced to bust windows, locked doors, and heads in a desperate bid to carve out a meager existence from a private economy. Consequently, many of Us (prisoners) were eventually busted over the head even more while being busted for being busted.

New Afrikan, Puerto Rican, Mexicano, and Native Nations are represented by an ever growing number of their citizens behind "kapitalist" bars as a result of our kolonial relationships to the north amerikkkan kolonial settler state. Moreover, the people being captured from the various kolonized nations by the state oftentimes represent the best and brightest of Our respective youth populations. Such an element (youth) represents the sharpest point of any nation's spear and is what makes Our situations all the more tragic and in need of more effective solutions.

We have the tools in some cases to repair the damage done by the state to Our forces. While in other instances We may not, however, the key for us is to rally Our imprisoned comrades forward with what We have available.

For example, study groups are still critical and should attempt (given the sharpening contradictions inside the oppressor nation) to include the heretofore "outlaw" north amerikkkan prisoner in the group when points of principled unity can be established. In fact, north amerikkkan prisoners should be encouraged to form their own study groups outside of the traditional "racist" groupings, so as to get a better understanding and appreciation of their own exploitation at the hands of their class enemy. In addition, We must become more united with Our respective communities by becoming more visible. As such, this visibility must necessarily reflect a philosophical view which both takes into consideration the level of development of the masses (which as a rule is generally backward), while encouraging further (critical) development as we unite in struggle against the north amerikkkan kolonial settler state, and its various organs of oppression. Finally, the most pressing concerns confronting prisoners and necessarily society should be given Our greatest focus such as state executions, lengthy prison sentences, brutality, control units, the lack of health care and education, etc. All of which is the dialectic of Our human struggle, as oppressed people, from people to people who have become prisoners while scrambling in a kapitalist world.

Recently We have witnessed the new genocidal onslaught, the intensification and legitimization of which is spearheaded by

the u.s. kongress. We have witnessed in the past several months a huge number of new repressive laws being passed in regards to prisoners and so-called kkkcrime. All across the kountry We are witnessing various states follow the lead of the kongress in pushing so-called kkkcrime packages. These packages are demanding that prisoners now serve 85% of their time, or 100% if they have a murder conviction. This allows states to qualify for matching federal funds to build more prisons. We see "three strikes you're out" laws being implemented nationally. We see such reactionary laws and campaigns to ban weights inside the prisons, and to take away all educational and vocational programs. We see and hear the reactionary and bloodthirsty howling for limitation on all Death Row appeals. The genocidal penalty is not only being expanded, but will begin to be utilized more frequently. Assembly-line executions will become more common and the general masses will become more desensitized to the barbarity of it. Most of these laws are aimed at poor oppressed people in general and kolonized people/oppressed nations in particular. The so-called "contract with america", is in actuality a kkkcontract on kolonized subjects confined within the imperialist u.s. borders. It is in actuality an intensification of genocide and genocidal policies against kolonized people.

## Reactionary climate

The reactionary climate that is all-pervasive is a clear indication of what the future holds for the general masses of oppressed people on the outside, as on prisoners as well. The question is: how do We confront such a problem? How do We confront these new realities? This new offensive of the state?

Historically, the struggle on the streets has impacted directly on the prison struggle. During the 60s the civil rights movement and revolutionary politics had a direct impact on the political development of thousands of prisoners. They inspired much resistance behind the walls and heroic struggle, sacrifice and battles. The state learned from this, they learned from Attica, the Soledad Brothers, etc. Though many of the same contradictions We see now existed then, they were not as sharp as they are today. The state foresaw social upheaval and social chaos taking place in society. This time, they have anticipated such and have developed strategies to counter what they were not too effective in countering during the 60s and 70s. One of the strategies has been to gain as tight a control of the prisons as possible. Its response has been to construct kkkcontrol units which are modern scientific dungeons. Prisons designed not only to isolate, but to destroy the prisoner mentally and physically. Prisons no longer designed just to warehouse, but designed specifically to destroy. Those who would ordinarily be the ones to spearhead organizing behind the walls are being weeded out and placed inside control units, while the rest of the kamps are being made so repressive that prisoners are trying to scramble out of the way of this repressive tidal wave.

At this present stage we feel, in an attempt to counter this onslaught and combat the reactionary climate being created in society, that We as prisoners must develop a collective voice. We have to try to give voice to Our struggle and try to counter, expose and legitimize the lies and propaganda of the state. We want to attempt to seize upon the time and ability We have now to move towards higher stages of organizing while We can. We want to move away from solely theoretical development and begin to focus equally on applying Our politics to concrete conditions. More and more the possibility that many of Us may not make it out of these prisons alive is becoming crystal clear.

The state is sending a clear signal, especially to the youth who are flooding the penal kkkolonies, amerikkka's gulag. Many will have to be freed by the revolution.

If We have any intention of countering this wave of murderous repression We have to start attacking some of these particular contradictions. We have drafted a proposal that is presently circulating and being implemented inside Indiana's prisons. This proposal was born as a direct result of the murder of Political Prisoner of War Ajamu Nasser (s/n gregory resnover), by the state on December 8, 1994. And the fall-out from the retaliatory death of a neo-colonial guard five days later.

## Forming committees

We are forming committees that are geared towards focusing on particular areas, e.g. the death penalty as a form of, and tool of, genocide against kolonial subjects, the construction of control units and the fact that prisoners from kolonized nations represent the majority inside them, and the kkkcontrol units as instruments of torture. We want to focus on the targetting of the youth for incarceration with huge sentences as another component of counterinsurgency and a part of an overall genocidal process. We want to focus on how prisoners with life

have to have some way of fighting back, of resistance. The kkkcourts are clearly signalling that they are giving the Bureau of Prisons a free reign in its terrorizing of the hundreds of thousands of prisoners held under their control.

Prisoners have in the past been able to scramble away from confronting oppressive realities. Sometimes this scrambling has been through some kind of chemically-induced form of escape, some cushy privileged job or through collaborating with the state. However, now that the prisons have become so repressive, the ability to scramble out of the way and not be directly affected by the repression has been immensely reduced. For one, a vast number of jobs for prisoners is being cut. Unemployment of prisoners in Indiana is sky high and at the Indiana State Prison it is over 60%. The ability to engage in narcotics trafficking and escape through some form of "high" is slowly being eradicated as non-contact visits become institutionalized across the board and the state begins to police their own corrupt employees a little tighter. As k-9 units begin to patrol behind the walls and demands for a urine test become more frequent, such practices become more detrimental. As weights, telephones, tv's and other privileges are taken, and even smok-



sentences who have served 15, 20 or more years of their sentences are constantly turned down for parole due to the "serious nature of the offense". In essence, We plan to try and expose how this so-called contract with america and all this reactionary legislation is just another form of kolonial oppression disguised as something else.

We want to organize prisoners to confront some of these realities to do research on them and to contact outside organizations who are doing work in this area. We want to network with the anti-control unit people. We have a committee to network with the anti-death penalty people, etc. We are not being rigid in the application of Our politics in the sense that We are willing to work with some progressive mainstream organizations. Our objective is to create a stronger working relationship between the inside and outside and in the process allow ourselves to develop a collective voice. We want to encourage prisoners across the country to seize upon this initiative. In this way We can network these inside committees through outside facilitators and further help build a national structure inside these prisons which might allow for some collective resistance in the future. As the state begins to kill more and more of Us, begins to bury more and more of Us alive in Florence-type kkkcontrol units, We

ing is banned, prisoners cannot escape the repression. We are forced to face the music. We are forced to either tighten Our belts, i.e., scramble towards resisting, while trying to gain some type of control over Our lives, or We are forced to scramble towards the state, capitulate to the state. Bow down to the state. It is slowly getting to the point where we are forced to either organize and fight back or surrender and accept a very slow and torturous death. ∞

If you are interested in seeing this proposal or trying to work towards organizing a committee(s) where you are, you can contact either the person/organization that printed this or me at:

FUSSPP  
P.O. Box 565  
Madison, WI 53701

"Prisoners are people and people will always become prisoners, so long as they find themselves at the mercy of a capitalist people — Prisoner."

*In the spirit of struggle and sacrifice let's scramble towards combatting genocide and kolonial violence.*

**Note:** Prisoners in Indiana cannot receive a copy of the proposal through the mail in light of recent events and still ongoing investigations.



# A call for amnesty for Black Political Prisoners and POWs

My name is Lorenzo Komboa Ervin. I live in Atlanta, Georgia. In the late 1960's I was a member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Black Panther Party. Because of my activities in the Black Liberation movement of the 1960's, I was railroaded by the United States government to a "life" sentence, where I served almost 15 years. I was just one of a number of persons who went to prison from the Black revolutionary movement. There is nothing heroic or exceptional about my individual case. Many of those with whom I was in prison are still there, such as Herman Bell, Sundiata Acoli and many others who have gone there since my release. It is for them I make this proposal, not for myself.

The idea of general amnesty for Black political prisoners/prisoners-of-war (PPs/POWs) is based on two primary reasons, well recognized in international law: (1) humanitarian, and (2) political, although not necessarily in that order. This proposal is a bare outline for an amnesty campaign, there is no "textbook".

Just so everyone will understand what I

am *not* talking about, let me say this first: I am not talking about *Amnesty International*, the liberal reform organization, which has a policy against supporting anyone who has engaged in or advocated violence; I am also not talking about having political prisoners filing for a presidential pardon and begging for "forgiveness" for their revolutionary acts. We do not know what mechanism the state will use to grant amnesty (pardon, executive clemency, declaration of amnesty, habeas corpus, etc.), nor should we care as long as the state does not have the prisoners or the movement make any political compromises, and as long as they deliver the PPs/POWs from prisons alive. I want to make sure that everyone understands fully what I am talking about.

First, what is amnesty? It is a political demand on an authority, usually a government, to drop all criminal or disciplinary charges before or after an insurrection or other act of resistance; or a demand upon the state to release all political prisoners, no matter what their offense. This latter demand is called general amnesty, but it requires serious organizing of a movement

capable of challenging the state for power and uniting all insurgent movements in the American empire. In fact, we have not seen a movement like this since the Black Liberation movement of the 1960's, some 30 years ago. The fact is that we have not now reached this stage, but that we cannot wait around for that day to arrive. We must organize a movement which can free PPs/POW now.

I am talking about a specific class of long-term political prisoners whom an amnesty campaign can be built around first: imprisoned members of the Black Panther Party and the Black Liberation Army wing of the BPP, many of whom have been imprisoned for over 20 years. This BPP/BLA campaign, however, will just be the *first* campaign of many to release *all* PPs/POWs; the truth is that we must build this movement in stages, long-term BPP/BLA prisoners first, then other prisoners while we fight to dismantle the prison system itself (and the state which uses it as its major weapon).

## The state disposes, while the movement reposes

There is one extremely important lesson in all of this: *the state does not set the timetable for how long political prisoners stay in prison; this is entirely up to us in the support movement outside.* If we can build a movement powerful enough, with a mass base that will engage in direct action to demand the freedom of PP's/POWs, then we can free practically any prisoner in custody.

The second lesson is that *we cannot win a piecemeal or sectarian political prisoner defense campaign.* We must build universal support for political prisoners, not just our individual political formations opportunistically using their cases. A joint amnesty campaign requires that all individual defense campaigns unite, both in action and organizationally. This also means that we drop the infamous practice of "selective support" (and non-support) of certain political prisoners on sectarian grounds, and support all left-wing political prisoners without distinction. It means as well that we drop all pretense that a sectarian group, no matter how energetic their campaign may be, can by itself free a political prisoner. Rarely is that so; we must build the united front for political prisoner defense that comrade George Jackson spoke of in *Blood in My Eye*. Twenty weak "defense committees" simply don't do anybody any good. No rhetoric, *just* real live facts.

That particular opportunity should only manifest as the advantage you have to keep applying politics-in-command with consistency, to be effective at a "requisite opportunity". Utilize the multitude of organizations and contribute your writings etc. Support the organizations all you can in keepin' politics-in-command. ALL of this is a requisite(necessary) in Our struggle, without cease, to dismantle any form of exploitation/colonialism and build a new and better Society.

Idleness should never exist, but it does and all who are conscious should critically evaluate its existence and strive to negate it. Are you, in some shape, form, or fashion, in 'idle' with the politics of Our Struggle?

In honor of Prisoners' Justice Day — document it!

I'll like to end by sending a solidarity shout out to a brotha/comrad who has definitely kept (and is keepin') it on the real (politics-in-command) with consistency. . . Uhuru, UmoJa, SaSa, Una Fahamu — Shaka Shakur!! ∞

Re-Building,  
Kweli O. Shakur #856079  
Box 41. I.S.P. D.C.H. #345  
Michigan City, IN 46360

## A bare bones amnesty campaign

It is important first to understand that we are talking about conducting a political campaign and building a mass movement around the issue of political prisoners/pow's, and that we are not just making another paper appeal to the "conscience" of the American police state, (which doesn't have a conscience anyway). This campaign would mobilize our forces into a joint amnesty group, in order to maximize our resources and our human capital. It would also expose the crimes of the state on a broad scale, for instance COINTELPRO and how it was used to smash the BPP. So here are a few things I propose:

1. Holding a mass meeting to be held sometime in the next few months, (I am intentionally not being specific as to the date), to build a mass amnesty campaign for BPP/BLA long term prisoners. This meeting would also be a mass educational event to explain COINTELPRO to a whole new generation of activists and the people at large;
2. Beginning an immediate campaign to file an International Writ of Habeas Corpus to the United Nations International Court of Justice, UN Human Rights Commission, and other international bodies, to demand the release of the BPP/BLA prisoners/POWs;
3. Conducting an international information campaign to expose the U.S. government's COINTELPRO, OPERATION CHAOS, and other such political repression of the BPP/BLA. But this information campaign should especially demand the release of all BPP/BLA prisoners now that the history of the BPP is being revisited by playwrights, authors, film makers and scholars, presaging intense public interest and a new reawakening of BPP politics by youth groups;
4. Building a (political) Prisoners Defense Fund to raise money for legal defense, to support prisoners' families, and to send small amounts for prisoners' "creature comforts" while they are in prison;
5. Conduct an emergency amnesty campaign for Mumia Abu Jamal, while he is still alive on Pennsylvania death row. This case is a perfect example of how our organizational weakness might deprive this brother of his life. We must come together around this common agenda of saving him from state murder, or bear the badge of shame at our indecision and inaction.

## Conclusion

Rather than engaging in rhetoric to criticize this document or dismiss it out of hand, it is hoped that activists can constructively discuss it, and more importantly act on its prescriptions. I could not possibly, and have not sought to, cover everything in this proposal. I encourage others to take this proposal, add their ideas and make it better. It won't hurt my feelings, and it is not engraved in stone. I and the Black Partisan Anarchist Federation, a new political formation, cannot on our own make this project a reality; it requires that the majority of groups organized around the cases of political prisoners/pow's put aside egotism, opportunism, and sectarianism, and work toward the goal of freeing our political prisoners. That is all I have to say at this time. ∞

Lorenzo Komboa Ervin  
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Decatur, GA 30030

### Artists this issue

- Cover — Foo Chee Seng  
page 1 — Laura Whitehorn  
page 4 — Peter Collins  
page 6 — Johnny Jacobs  
page 8 — credit next issue  
centre — Foo Chee Seng  
page 15 — Peter Collins  
page 16 — William Sojka  
page 19 — D. Girard



# Idle Revolutionary

There exists what can be defined as "Idle Revolutionary"...It's something that should definitely not be in existence but is. I personally have never ran across (in my studies) a phraseology or terminology, defining "Idle Revolutionary"; that's not because it doesn't exist, because it does...

In essence it can be defined as: "a revolutionary or potential (aspiring) revolutionary who, in the process of growth and development stagnates her or his politics of consistency by concluding to wait for an 'particular opportunity'." This exists amongst the advanced comrades and the aspiring revolutionaries.

The potentiality of an individual to be successful or advance, is never in idle ... That is, no matter what stage of growth and development one may be in ... Even as a child the potentiality is never idle, but instead he or she consistently perpetuates the potential(s) in reaching the particular goal(s).

Whether an aspiring revolutionary or advanced revolutionary, idleness should

never be a factor of one's condition or situation, under any circumstances! After you reach out to Family, associates and comrades with the knowledge of our struggle (i.e. contradictions, goals, etc.): that should still continue with consistency, even if obstacles exist.

"...a revolutionary or aspiring revolutionary should never be despaired because he or she doesn't reach a particular individual of the masses; the overall is the collective to reach and if at first you don't succeed, change the strategies and tactics, and go at it again with consistency, persistency and efficiency."

Idleness should never exist! Develop to the fullest your theoretician potentials and document it. Send it to the organizations you know of, get the theories and practices out there to be documented — published (for the purpose of historical continuity); Let ones know what works on your end, as a contribution to the collective. Share your ideals, criticisms, and comments, hold back nothing of it for "a particular opportunity".



# Nursing sister Battle Axe, or the process of monster creation in Warkworth Prison

While a prisoner at Warkworth Prison, a most singular experience illuminated the process that yields monstrous behaviour. It has also shown me that the root cause of the problem, age-old abuse of power, is not addressed by political correctness. Political correctness may even act against justice. My experience with the politically correct power of nursing sister Murphy illustrates this problem quite well.

This experience began with the trek to Prison Health Care to get a couple of tablets to relieve my migraine headache. I had been cogitating long and hard about the many individual prisoners with whom I had become acquainted. The question concerned those few who are eventually released, and then go on to commit further crimes. Sometimes these crimes are much more horrendous than the ones that originally led to their imprisonment. Were these fellows nurtured along the path to monsterhood by the very authorities supposed to correct them?

The migraine pain hampering my thought processes, I asked the English nurse, Murphy, if I could please have two of the pain tablets allotted to me monthly by the physician. Claiming to have checked the medical log, Nursing Sister Murphy launched into a belittling spiel indicating that I was not entitled to any more tablets that month. Her spiel, and the knowledge that it was physically impossible for my allotment to be used up, provoked my migraine to a new quantum level of pain. In the dust of futile further argument, I withdrew to lie down in my cell and cover my eyes.

Four hours and a shift change later, I was still in great pain and staggered back down to Health Care. The replacement nurse promptly and pleasantly administered the needed pain tablets and confirmed that there were plenty of tablets left in my allotment. She kindly invited me to return in another four hours if I were still in distress.

Several weeks later when I was still pondering the notion of monster manufacturing by the prison authorities, a migraine again afflicted me. Lo and behold, there was nurse Murphy again on duty at the wicket. She repeated, almost identically, her belittling treatment and denial of medication. As much as I was tempted to shower her with insults, as so many other prisoners had found it necessary to do, I held my tongue. Once again, four hours later, she was gone and I was again able to obtain the tried and true medical relief from an excellent female nurse.

To prevent a third bout of abuse by nurse Murphy, I met with the officer in charge of the hospital. He appreciated that I was trying to solve the problem in a civilized fashion and without resorting to the formality of a grievance. He assured me that Murphy would receive a reprimand. Later he was to agree that Murphy was a battle axe (middle-

aged domineering woman — according to the Oxford Dictionary). He added that she was, however, more than middle-aged. It seems many prisoners and staff had also justly complained about her.

About a week later my Living Unit Officer, Miss Pauline Smyth, accosted me. It was my policy to avoid interaction with this immature, inexperienced guard. She was bent on afflicting prisoners with her pernicious brand of feminism. She was trying to express some problem about nurse Murphy and medication. In removing myself from her clutches, I said I had no interest in discussing the battle axe. Over my shoulder I added that her incompetence had been reported to the Chief of Health Care.

In her puerile voice Smyth cried out that she was charging me with disrespect for an officer (not even present). The trial was consistent with the Correctional Service's (CSC)

extension of the legal system's reality of guilty until proved innocent. I was convicted in their disciplinary kangaroo court and punished. Before the Judge had cut off my questioning of Smyth, I elicited that nurse Murphy had initiated this act of vengeance through case management and Smyth. Clearly Murphy had not responded well to the justly deserved reprimand by her superior. Smyth was later to boast to me that she could always manage a conviction.

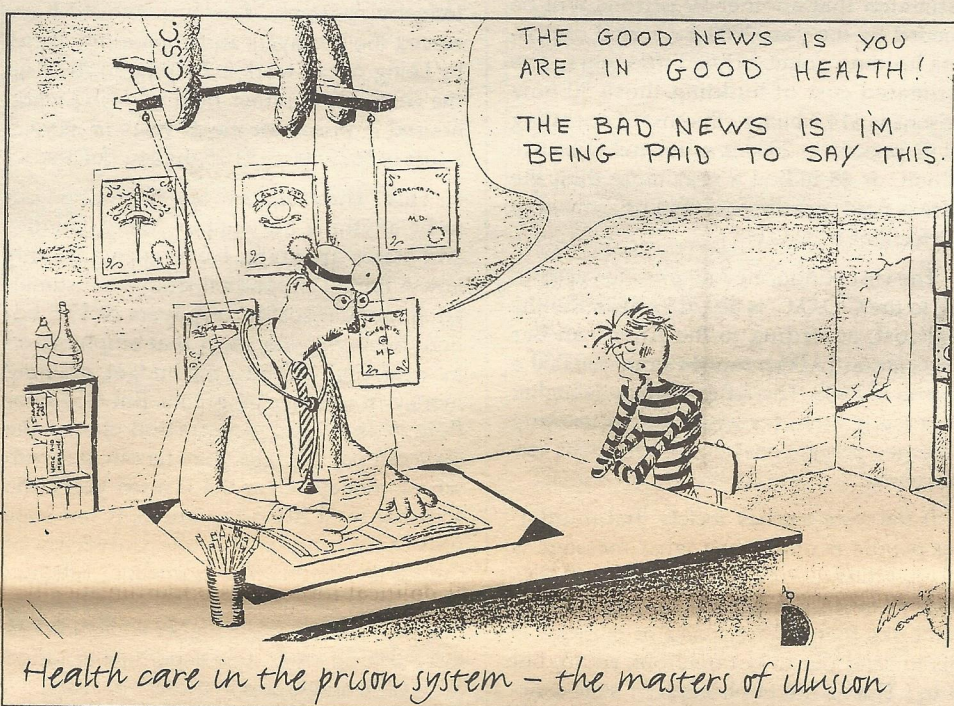
Thus we see that the CSC's response to criticism, to persecute the victim, is reminiscent of the manner of the Public Complaints Bureau of the Police. That is, they investigate themselves and then arrange punishment of the victim. I appealed the decision through the designated channels, but ran into Warden Provan's ubiquitous denial of staff wrongdoing.

This charge is perhaps the most trivial imaginable, and is certainly without merit. The punishment, a minor loss of privilege, was insignificant except for putting a black mark, with exaggeration potential, on my parole file. But just imagine this type of gross abuse of power held over a prisoner's already distressed head. And, for good measure, repeated day in and day out in an exalating manner. What does it teach the prisoner? Is it not the same as the lessons that a continuously mistreated dog learns from his abuser? Just as surely as a continuously mistreated dog will bite someone, so will the prisoner subjected to this abuse of power attack someone in a monstrous act.

This has been a rather lengthy description of an event that to all reasonable society is trivial. It has, hopefully, shed some light on the insidious process at work that can turn some prisoners into monsters.

Note: One of the correctional officers well acquainted with nurse Murphy described her as a f...ing bitch, but coined the term *Nursing Sister Battle Axe* as more politically correct. Warden Provan later promoted Smyth to Case Management officer, bewildering staff and prisoners alike. ∞

Eric R. Biddle  
Prisoner #933289B  
April 1995



## Canadian notes

Correctional Services Canada and the Solicitor-General can look forward to a long hot summer. An attempt to get the heat off has been to maintain a virtual blackout in the mainstream since a unprecedented amount of critical press during the past fall and winter. They have now gone back to reporting on sensationalist, horror and violence, to help maintain the belief that there is no alternative but to continue the hang em high approach to crime, regardless that the failures are obvious. We will continue reporting what is not in the press, which usually amounts to what the truth is about the inside. We ask Canadian prisoners to write to us about news for this column in the future.

Foremost is the continuing news and misinformation regarding the Prison For Women. There has been some criticism of the Solicitor-General's calling a one-year inquiry to incidents and reports that have already been investigated. There are questions around what is to be gained by such a process, the length of time it will take and what could possibly come out about P4W and CSC that we do not already know?

The prisoners of B-Range have been attempting to get the facts straight about what occurred during the April 94 incidents and some of the issues since. The range rep wrote to editors of major newspapers earlier this year, attempting to dispell misinformation and clarify the facts.

"We are very concerned by the lack of research and untruths in your [mainstream press] articles. Whatever happened to journalist integrity, ethics and principles? Isn't it essen-

tial to print the truth...?"

We would like to see corrections made to your stories regarding further reporting of updates dealing with B-Range Women." -GD

B-Range women are criticizing the coverage that has been responsible for creating the public impression that these women are desperate and dangerous. For example, there were reports of a hostage-taking, a riot, and that a guard had been stabbed with a syringe. No guard was taken hostage and no syringe was ever found even after an extensive search. Anyone who saw thge video of the cell extractions knows there was no riot. What we are seeing is a mushrooming cover-up of CSC's mistakes by their not following their own policies and allowing inexperienced guards to escalate conflict. It is important to keep a close eye on P4W, to keep in touch with the prisoners there to support an dassist them in their struggle. Doing this will also send the message to CSC that reprisals already occurring for the prisoners' outspokenness will not go unnoticed nor tolerated.

In the first-ever charges against guards in the death of prisoner Robert "Tex" Gentles, the prosecution's case against Sean Wylie and Barry Aitchison is compromised by irrelevant debate. The coroner is now waivering on previous conclusions about the cause of Robert Gentles' death. The position of the defense is that if it is not clear just how Tex died, there is no basis to continue proceedings.

A less direct approach to stop the prosecution of Wylie and Aitchison has been the

use of delay tactics which will strain depleting legal funds. Without the Gentles' Family having pressed for prosecution, this case would never have gone before the courts, and the family is no longer able to sustain funding for lawyer Julian Falconer as it has until now. Fundraising is needed to continue the prosecution while raising public awareness about the case.

Aside from the obvious abuses, there are the ongoing issues that some may not consider matters of consequence. There was a recent death at Warkworth that will most likely reveal yet another case of criminal medical neglect. This is another display of prisoncrats notoriety for their indifference to the health care problems of prisoners. For one, they fail to acknowledge that the prison environment is one that breeds viruses. The more obvious ones are the flu and colds but there are more deadly ones that do break out such as tuberculosis and hepatitis. Not to mention that prisons have a very high rate of HIV/AIDS. With more budget cuts, health care needs of prisoners will be neglected even more, and prisoners will continue to die needlessly.

Other news from penitentiary city is that activists who took the initiative to warn the public about killer guards — the ones already labelled "a gang of thugs" by a judge — are being charged with something like criminal libel and will most likely be punished for performing their civic duty. They postered Kingston with flyers displaying photos of guards involved in the Gentles' killing. Now that the community has been warned about these criminal guards there will be an effort to warn prisoners about guards they must watch out for. It is notable that the press wishes to satisfy public "demand" for gory crime stories but no scrutiny of CSC is permitted. ∞

## Warkworth Institution Mission Statement

I spent more than five years at Wallyworld (Warkworth) and from what I witnessed, it was necessary to re-write the CSC Mission Statement to suit the attitude of the administration and staff. C.A."

The Corruptional Service Canada, Warkworth Inst. as part of an autocratic, despotic and tyrannical system, contributes to violence in society by mercilessly oppressing, stifling and humiliating prisoners to the very last day of their sentence.

Core Value 1:

Prisoners have no dignity; no potential for human growth and development, and absolutely no rights as members of society.

Core Value 2:

No prisoner has the potential to live as a law abiding citizen.

Core Value 3:

We believe that our strength and our major resources in achieving our objectives is the omnipotence of our draconian rules and regulations being enforced ruthlessly by our obsequious staff.

Core Value 4:

We believe that the sharing of our very limited imaginations, ideas and knowledge should be fostered among ourselves, but under no circumstances should these become a matter of public record if we are to achieve our mission.

Core value 5:

We believe in managing the service furtively and deceitfully, and be accountable to no one.

Charles Armstrong: RTC Kingston



# Murder by any other name is still murder

The killing of another human being is murder, no matter what excuse or coat you put on it. You can desensitize and frighten the people with the constant systematic propagation of material disseminated to win them over through the various media and claims of justice, law and order. But the reality of premeditated and sanctioned murder is vengeance and economics. If you want to punish someone, you don't murder them, you restrict their freedom, you deny them their access to a free society. In essence, you lock them up.

The constant premeditated and sanctioned murdering (executions) of people in this country has yet to prove to be a deterrent against crime. How can it be when it, in essence, "advocates what it claims to prevent"? If there was ever any truth in "Two wrongs don't make a right", this is it.

How can death be a deterrent or even a punishment? If one is dead, life ceases; you can't deter the dead, nor punish them. In the end the only thing which has been accomplished is the showing of vengeance on the one that the state has premeditatedly murdered. The vengeance death of another human being only means that that person will not have to suffer any more ills of this world. Not even so much as a common cold. I know this is not a very pleasant and intelligent way of looking at it. But neither is a premeditated and sanctioned murder.

As a civilized and intelligent people, we must seek to encourage other methods of dealing with, deterring, and even punishing the criminal element within our society. For if we don't, the age of those subjected to sanctioned murders will be between 6 and 16. For these are the ages of those which the state has planned and is planning on murdering for you and in your name. My question is, "Why?" It would appear that this question would be more interesting than how, through some legal maneuvers, the state finds a way to murder (execute) them. The idea of murdering (executing) some mother's only child is so distasteful to think about. But it's a reality, just the same. If you can not get into these minds before they commit these crimes, how then do you expect to get into their minds after they have been murdered by the state or imprisoned? Unless of course you come to a decision to reach out and help them, something the state/government has no plans of doing.

Capital punishment is not a moral issue; it is not a religious issue. Capital punishment is a political and economic issue. Economic in the sense that it provides money for the politicians.

## Dollars & Sense

I find it a very cunning and talented trick to be able to get the people (taxpayers) to contribute more of their tax dollars toward building prisons than toward helping the kids of today. It's like the government is planning or has planned in advance the deterioration of the youth of tomorrow, and

the building of these prisons is to facilitate them. Rather than spend the thousands of dollars in helping to promote programs and projects within the communities to help these kids and influence their minds and lives and give them something to strive for in the future, they would prefer to spend millions of dollars locking them up, without any attempt to rehabilitate them while within a prison environment.

In the 132-year span between 1852 and 1984, according to a two-page display of charts compiled from multiple sources in the August issue of *California Lawyer*, exactly 12 prisons were constructed in California. In the 10 years between 1984 and 1994, 20 prisons were built. Another 12 prisons were already in the planning stages even before the "Three Strikes" law was passed in 1994 (an identical version of which is on the November ballot). Under the new law, it is estimated that another 50 prisons will be needed by the year 2000 for a total of prisons holding some 341,000 prisoners. The estimated cost of building those 50 new prisons is \$14.2 billion; the cost of operating all 94 prisons in 2000 is estimated to be \$10 billion, or \$8 billion a year more than the state is now spending on the Department of Corrections (C.D.O.C.).

The cost of housing one prisoner, according to the C.D.O.C. is \$20,525 a year. But the real cost, according to the American Bar Association (ABA), ranges from \$30,000 a year to \$37,000. The ABA estimate is higher because it includes as part of operating expenses prison construction and debt service costs.

If the state teaches society that murdering people is okay, then what message is this sending to our youth of today? "It's okay to murder (execute) someone if you don't like them." What kind of message is this to send out to not only our youth, but to us? This is the implication of state-sanctioned murders (executions).

I have concluded that the death penalty is wrong. That it lowers us all, that it is a surrender to the worst that is in us, that it uses a power — the official power of execution — which has never elevated a society, never brought back a life, never inspired anything but hate.

I have also come to the conclusion that this country's federal and state judicial systems neither want nor intend to reduce "crime" or to "rehabilitate" prisoners now confined. To do so would necessitate each criminal justice system requesting less money (taxes) than the year before. And that, folks, is their "job security". Politicians don't want educated criminals to become "smarter" than they are themselves and the guards sure won't have it, since they are the least intelligent of the system. How smart do you have to be to lock and unlock doors and gates eight hours a day?

The prison industry today is the fastest-growing industry in the nation on both levels, state and federal. Both levels are hiring

people as quickly as the prisons are built. And with the present proposal of a \$6.6 billion crime bill...Well! And who foots this bill? The taxpayers, the working men and women. What will happen in the 21st century? Will they make the planet Earth a prison and move out to the galaxies beyond to live? The most intelligent minds in the world reach for stars and beyond and yet refuse to solve the problems lying at their feet, those are ignored, and the people carted off to prisons for warehousing and sanctioned murder (executions). Already 13-year-old kids are being tried and convicted as adults and sent to prison, and even death rows across America.

Already, under the "Three Strikes & You're Out" law, the courts and prisons are being overcrowded. Look in the news today at the many men/women being sent to prison for life under this law. One case in particular stands out: "Man steals a piece of pizza and goes to prison for 25 years to life." The absent information in this case is the fact that the man was "homeless and hungry". Who did he actually hurt in the process of getting that piece of pizza? Surely he did not kill anyone to warrant such a lengthy sentence. Surely he could have served the taxpayers and community better by being put to work in helping to clean up the community rather than by being warehoused in prison for the 25 years or more at a cost of \$625,000 to \$1.25 million dollars.

This "Three Strikes" law has turned out to be anything but simple. Many counties and states are going bankrupt under this law. A Rand Corporation study has estimated an annual cost to taxpayers of \$5.5 billion. Some experts warn that emphasis on incarceration will bust the budget, draining money from other programs. But Governor Pete Wilson's administration claims the state can pay the bills. Sure he can, but with whose money? Over the last ten years, the state has built 20 prisons and only one state university campus and one University of California campus. The corrections function of the state has added 26,000 employees in that time period, while higher education has lost 8,000. All other state departments added just 16,000 employees in the last 10 years.

## Jobs, jobs, jobs

In 1985, there were 7,570 prison guards in California. By 1990 that figure doubled to 14,249. Today, just four years later, it has tripled to 25,547. Nearly 65% of the \$1.8 billion C.D.O.C. budget goes for salaries and benefits to its employees. The yearly pay for a California prison guard with a high school degree and six years on the job is \$45,000. The initial job qualification, beyond the high school diploma, is a six-week training course and no more than one felony conviction. The yearly salary for a starting tenured associate professor with a Ph.D at the University of California — one of the most competed-for and sought-after academic positions in the world — is \$43,100.

Working in a prison is an important and often unpleasant job, but research that UC professors conduct (beyond their value as teachers) in physics, engineering, biotechnology, agriculture, medicine and other applied sciences creates entire new industries and drives the state's economic growth. UC has lost some 7,500 positions in the last few years — about what Corrections has gained. For the cost of incarcerating one prisoner for a year, California could send two students to the University of California, three students to a California state university, and seven students to a community college. The budget for the CDOC has increased an average of 15% a year for 10 years, more than twice as much as public schools and higher education.

So it is clear that building and running prisons in California are growth industries. Looking for work? Try being a prison guard, in California they are paid 58% more than the national average for such a job. And it doesn't require any education, degrees, or training in locking and unlocking doors. Are our tax dollars being spent on true or false "solutions" to the crime problem? And how

has imprisonment worked to solve the state's and society's nagging crime problem? What is actually being done with this "Three Strikes" law is a holding action. More people are being arrested than the prosecutors can prosecute, than the judges can convict, than the jails and prisons can hold.

## Observation

Until there's a demand reduction — and that means education and treatment — you're not going to see any change. You cannot build your way out of the problem. I personally don't believe that's a workable alternative. In my experience, prisons and jails fill up as fast as they are built.

"America sees crime and punishment as if that's the only response to crime," said Vincent Schiraldi, executive director of The Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice. "How can crime go up when we're building more prisons? Because we take the money from stuff that would prevent that (criminal) behavior." The state and federal prison population topped 1 million for the first time in history, hitting 1,012,851 at the end of June 1994. California's 150,000 and Texas's 124,136 accounted for more than one fifth of the total. While California is the nation's most populous state, Texas ranks third. New York, second in population, was third in prisoner population, with 75,657. Note: that these three states are the ones which carry the most popular votes for politicians.

Shell-shocked by horrors, we want the bars and the locks, never thinking about spending wisely and well. We invest a fortune (billions of dollars) on a college for criminals, where people learn that they are subhuman and act accordingly, a system called "correction" that doesn't correct.

The California Department's annual operating budget, now at \$3 billion, has been growing faster than the state budget as a whole. It has increased 14% a year since 1983-84, compared to a 7% growth rate for the whole budget, according to the legislative analyst's office.

The cost of this building boom — \$4.4 billion so far in California alone, plus interest costs for bonds that could double that, and with 25 more new prisons presently being constructed or on the table, will certainly tap the pockets of the taxpayers. And before long you too will be homeless and hungry and looking for that piece of pizza, with the threat of a state sentencing you to 25 years to life or planning your execution (murder).

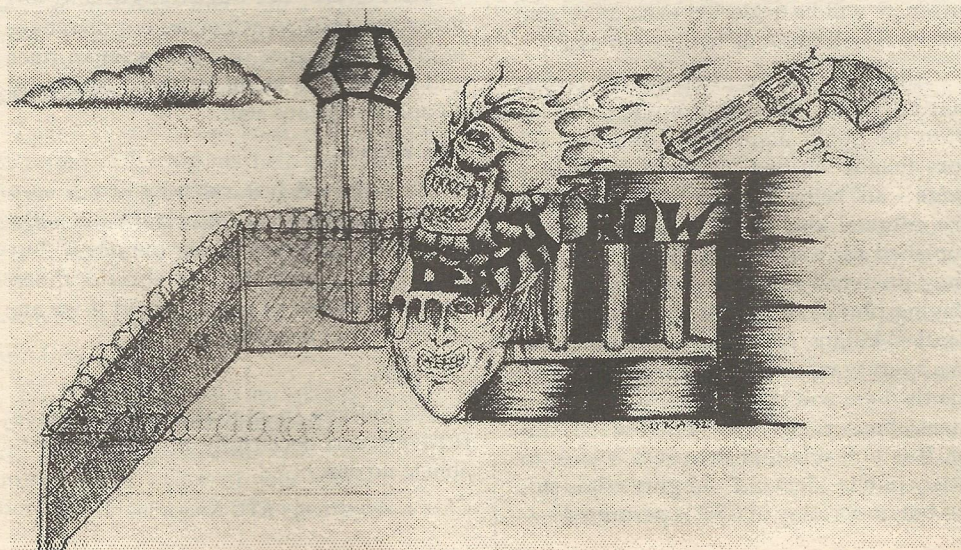
Marc Mauer of The Sentencing Project said he found it "distressing that the wealthiest country in the world finds it necessary to lock up 1 million of its citizens behind bars, that we haven't found better ways to deal with crime.

"Clearly we need a prison system for people who are truly violent and dangerous, but what's happened in recent years is that we've been locking up increasing numbers of drug and property offenders and we have very little to show for it in terms of reduced rates of crime", Mauer said. And consider that no efforts have gone into helping these drug abusers with their addictions nor have any efforts gone into rehabilitating any person in prison.

The Penal System Works Quite Well:

- It keeps the crime rate up by circulating angry, frustrated, and disproportionately poor people through an environment even more debilitating than their communities on the outside.
- The high crime rate helps keep public anxiety high.
- High public anxiety maintains a climate of fear that politicians can easily play to by promising to "do something about crime."
- So-called "tough-on-crime" legislators are encouraged to take the short-term solution approach of introducing and supporting bills lengthening sentences and creating new crimes; other politi-

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# The Naked Emperor

## Human Rights Violations in the U.S.

A Report on U.S. Compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

By Human Rights Watch and American Civil Liberties Union

216 pp. 1994. New York: Human Rights Watch. \$15.00 (pb).

We were sitting in Rockland County Jail on an evening some twelve years ago watching network news. The top story was that the police in Communist Poland had taken Lech Walesa into custody for a day to question him about his contacts with the pro-Solidarity underground. (Solidarity was the labor union movement opposed to the regime.) The TV captured the high drama as Walesa, sitting in the back of a police car, turned to the cameras and said, "Tell the world that they are violating my human rights." The spell this scene cast on us was broken by a sharp retort from my codefendant, Kuwasi Balagoon: "The media will make banner headlines about one guy detained for one day over *there*, but they won't even mention that there are close to a hundred people who've been sitting in jail for months for the very same thing — refusing to talk about alleged contacts with revolutionary underground organizations — right *here* in the good ole U.S. of A."\*

Indeed, most Americans still don't have the slightest idea that people here can be jailed without being accused of any crimes but simply because they won't rat on others to a grand jury. "Human Rights" are only publicly discussed when this government lectures other regimes, but we are long overdue to get our own house in order.

The Human Rights Watch (HRW) and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) deserve some credit for being willing to broach this generally taboo subject. While they're not ready to utter the bold truth that the emperor has no clothes, they do point to what they consider threadbare spots and thereby reveal some real flesh and blood on human rights concerns.

After a 25-year delay, the U.S. finally ratified the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) on September 8, 1992. For all the pomp and ceremony in signing, the Bush administration took several steps to ensure that the treaty would not lead to any broadening of rights in this country. First, the administration attached a series of "reservations, declarations, and understandings" that mean the enumerated provisions would not apply beyond what was already protected by U.S. law. Second, our government declared itself already in compliance with the rest of the treaty and thus precluded U.S. citizens and residents from invoking it in court. Thus, adopting the ICCPR resulted in *no* additional enforceable right for people in this country. The HRW and ACLU, however, use the valuable treaty text as a guidebook for exploring human rights violations in the U.S. — or at least examples of such. As they explain in their introduction, there are many important areas they didn't cover, such as discrimination against lesbians and gays and against the disabled.

This study — which ranges from race and sex discrimination to language rights to religious liberty — presents many important and vital issues, far more than can be detailed in a brief review. Here are just a few examples:

- Forty years after *Brown v. The Board of Education*, most African-American children remain in schools that are separate and decidedly unequal, denying them the most basic training and essential skills.
- In tests with equally qualified young men, white applicants were three times more likely to be hired than Black applicants.

- Despite some improvement in recent years, women on average still earn one-third less than similarly educated men.
- The U.S. action to interdict Haitian refugees on the high seas was an unprecedented arrogation of power in reaching far beyond U.S. territorial limits to prevent citizens of *another nation* from escaping their own country. Many Haitians and other immigrants, including juveniles, have been held in indefinite detention, under abysmal conditions.
- Independent investigations report numerous instances of unjustified shootings, torture, and sexual abuse, as well as widespread beatings, and verbal abuse, of Latino/a immigrants by federal border agents.
- The extreme overcrowding of prisons in the U.S. is increasingly stripping prisoners of privacy and dignity, resulting in serious deteriorations of health and safety, and leading to increased violence, including assaults on prisoners by staff.
- The well-known case of Rodney King is just an example of the common problem of unjustified police beatings and shootings, usually based on the victim's race.
- The U.S. defies international trends by expanding the death penalty and by applying it to juveniles. Changes in the law now make it much harder for death row inmates to be granted habeas corpus review of their convictions. In the past, 40 percent of the convictions that received such review were found to be illegal and were overturned by federal courts. The authors also cite several studies showing extreme racial disparity in the application of this ultimate penalty.

While this account is very instructive, the discussion is limited and legalistic. We're given a good survey of how decisions by the

### BOOK REVIEW

#### A Report on U.S. Compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

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Reagan / Bush Supreme Court have cut back on the chances for winning discrimination suits and have eroded the divide between church and state, as well as of recent legislation to restore most of those rights. But we are given very little sense of the human and social impact of racism and sexism — what they do to people's lives — and of how intractable they can be to even the loftiest language in civil rights laws. There is virtually nothing, for example, on violence and sexual abuse against women, which are bludgeons against the enjoyment of the most basic and commonplace of liberties.

The HRW and ACLU perform a service in shining some light on two arenas where most Americans have been convinced that there is no conceivable problem: voting rights and freedom of expression. After the Voting Rights Act led to increased Black voter registration in the 1970s, many states and localities engineered a host of new, racially motivated maneuvers to negate minority representation:

They made elective posts appointive; created racially gerrymandered election boundaries; instituted majority runoffs to prevent minority victories under prior plurality systems; and substituted at-large elections for elections by single-member districts.

(This rarely reported offensive against minority voting rights is what led advocates such as Lani Guinier to explore possible remedies. But it was only her responses, torn out of this context, that received the high-decibel opprobrium in the media that denied her a job in the Justice Department.)

The U.S. has perhaps the strongest legal protection for free speech in the world. But there are some restrictions on the flow of ideas across the border. The President retains the power to exclude any class of

aliens deemed "detrimental to the interests of the United States," which is used to bar most representatives of Cuba from coming to and speaking in the U.S. Conversely, current restrictions severely limit travel by U.S. citizens to see for themselves "enemy" countries such as Cuba and Libya. Another free speech issue is the way the right of the news media to cover military operations was placed under a new series of restrictions during the 1991 war against Iraq — restrictions not invoked for any security needs but rather to shield the government from embarrassing coverage (and that helped turned the media into unabashed cheerleaders for U.S. military intervention).

However iconoclastic, this book misses the more telling problems through its failure to confront the realities of economic and political power. The decisive stranglehold is that "free" speech and elections cost big bucks. To be a viable candidate for major office, one must be considered "responsible" by the giant corporations who own the big media, and additionally be able to raise millions of dollars for campaigning. In fact, the U.S. political system is not so much based on the vaunted "one person, one vote" as it is on "one dollar — or really one million dollars — one vote". The poorer half of the population is effectively denied political voice and representation.

The HRW and ACLU in effect accept the dominant discourse within the U.S. limiting the issue to political and civil rights. But international law emphatically includes economic, social, and cultural rights — freedom from want and fear — as essential components of human rights. Thus, any serious treatment of the subject would have to zero right in on the millions of hungry, homeless, and unemployed people in the U.S.

An examination at that level might also push us to look at how the U.S. ruling class sits on top of a ruthless world economy. The considerable cushion of wealth they extract — at the cost of the very survival of millions of human beings throughout the Third World — is precisely what enables them to be strong and secure enough to afford a much wider range of free speech within this country (to the appreciable degree that someone like myself can write such critical articles, even from within prison). But when people use such rights effectively to build a significant challenge to the profits and control of those in power — as was accomplished by the Black Liberation Movement of the 1960s — then, First Amendment be damned, the system will call out all its guns of slanders, frame-ups, and assassinations.

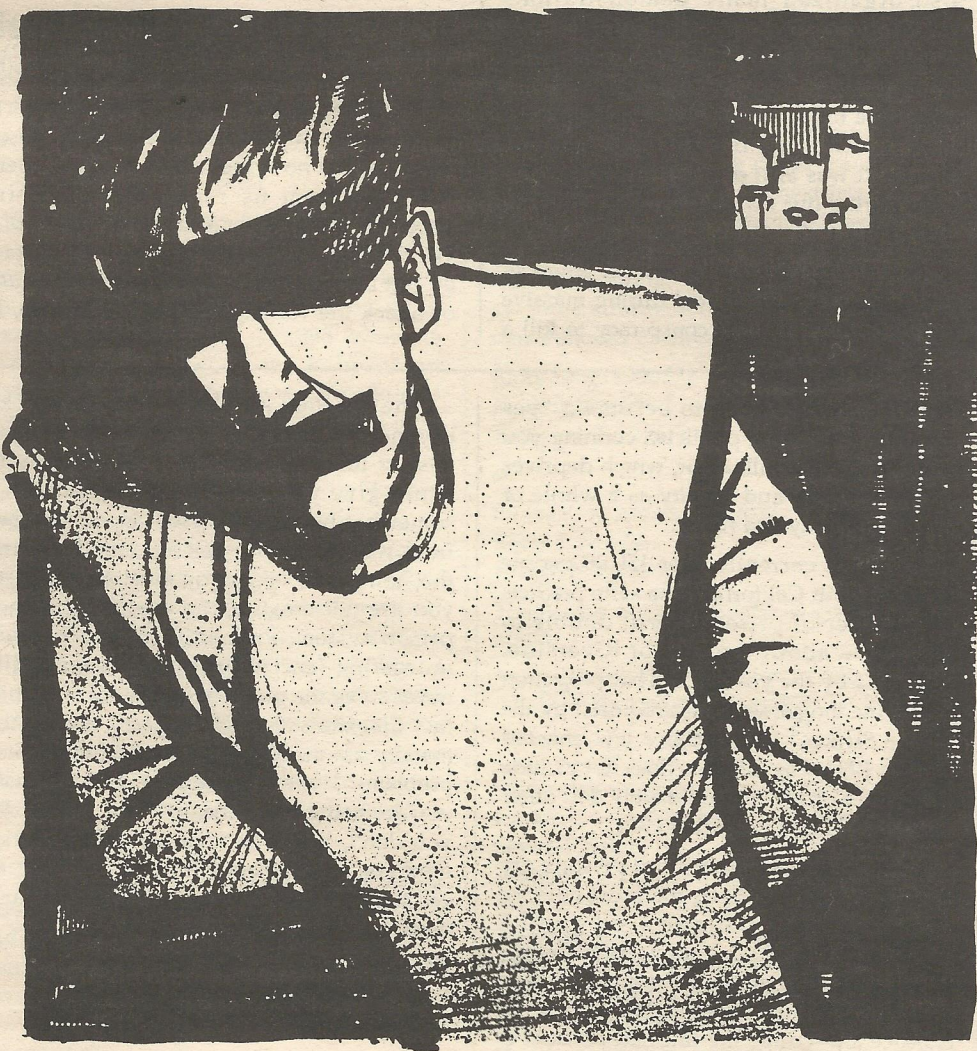
The first and foremost human right under international law is self-determination, which indeed constitutes Article 1 of the ICCPR; but it isn't even mentioned in this book. This most fundamental right has been long denied through the U.S. conquest and domination of Puerto Rico, which was explicitly denoted as a form of colonialism by the UN committee on decolonization. Native American Nations, New Afrikans (Blacks), and Mexicano/as in the U.S. all have powerful claims to self-determination rooted in centuries of oppression. A serious study of this principal concern would also go a long way toward explaining the basis for many of the more specific abuses discussed.

Thus the title, *Human Rights Violations in the U.S.*, is a misnomer. It promises a sumptuous banquet but offers only a smattering of hors d'oeuvres. Nonetheless there can be tasty and piquant tidbits, especially if they whet your appetite to hunt down the main course. ∞

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\* Today, Lech Walesa, the former Solidarity union leader, is the President of Poland as it goes through the throes of "shock therapy" to return it to capitalism.

Kuwasi Balagoon, Black Liberation Army militant, died in a New York State prison, from AIDS, on December 13, 1986.





## Responses

# Kommunique to our kollektive

Before I proceed with my komunique I would like to briefly respond to Brotha Sanyika Shakur "Come clean" article in the last issue (PNS #50). As a long time member of the Black Guerrilla Family I was somewhat taken back by his article, but as a New Afrikan Revolutionary nationalist and dedicated soldier of the New Afrikan Independence Movement (N.A.I.M.). I have to agree with his assessment, analysis and constructive criticism; and I must appeal to all my comrades not to allow emotions to contaminate our capacity to comprehend the significance of Sanyika's critical overview. His article was an accurate scientific analysis of the facts as it pertains to our failure to adequately make the necessary transitions. We should commend Sanyika for his courage and insight to identify and then criticize that which has proven to be antithetical. There's nothing in his article that we have not discussed among ourselves, from the proliferation of non-revolutionary elements in our organization to the need to complete that ideological transition.

I do want to make some corrections in Brotha Sanyika's assessment. New Afrikan is not a new terminology in our party. We made the transformation from a communist platform to a revolutionary nationalist formation in late 78/'79. The early '80s mark our last transformation. It was during this period that we embraced N.A.R.N. (New Afrikan Revolutionary Nationalism) as our ideology. We had even developed New Afrikan Revolutionary Nationalist Cadres specifically designed to facilitate and validate our ideological and organizational transition. Many events occurred during this period which had led to our failure (both internal and external factors) to complete our transition. We were engaged in a very vicious conflict which included the guards. We were also accused of killing a guard-pig in San Quentin. The repercussion of all this had deterred our efforts, but I make no excuse. We are responsible for our own failure. We have had other opportunities, so there's no excuses. I would like to add that the Brotha who wrote the article "Support New Afrikan Prisoners" (PNS #49) was not trying to deceive the New Afrikan community. That article was based on his assessment and understanding. I believe his intentions was, and is, pure. We as New Afrikan prisoners do need the support of our people regardless of what group we may or may not belong to.

I said it then and I will say it now that the Black Guerrilla Family (BGF) does not take responsibility for the senseless murder

of Huey P. Newton. Our accountability goes as far as we have lost control of our organization especially in terms of the standards and procedures of recruitment. Huey didn't get killed because the alleged shooter was an alleged member of our party, he got killed for trying to take dope from another dopefiend. I agree with Sanyika that this was not a result of a COINTELPRO ploy. Unfortunately, this is the real life drama which play itself over and over again throughout the New Afrikan community; but to imply that this was typical behavior among alleged/and or actual members of our party is incorrect. This is typical among all brothas who have failed to relinquish their criminal mentality, not exclusive to alleged members of the BGF; but I would say, if he was in fact a member of our organization, he is just another example of our failure to convert the criminal-minded.

As for the different formations the article referred to, my Brotha was only speaking in terms of the fact that many of the older members are former members of these various formations which also includes the Black Panther Party, the Symbionese Liberation Front, Nation of Islam and Communist Party. The Black August Organizing Committee/Activists was a formation of the Black Guerrilla Family. We did a lot of community organizing under this banner during the early '80s. We had also organized many demonstrations protesting prison conditions, as well as a freedom campaign to release our comrad Ernest Graham who was being tried for the third time for allegedly killing a pig-guard in retaliation for the death of comrad George. It was also during this period that we'd started our own paper (Black August News Ban).

This formation became defunct when all our comrades were arrested during massive and televised raids for conspiracy to kill a

warden in each prison for the August 1st 1978 death of Jeffery Khatari Gauden. So to imply that we have been obsolete for the last 20 years was inaccurate. Our political decline as a collective party started around 1985. I make no attempts to negate the validity of Brotha Sanyika's article, I just wanted to make some corrections, and provide some information that Sanyika was obviously unaware of. When outsiders (i.e. non-members) write about our organization they rarely speak of the positive contributions we have made, not only post-comrad George death did we lead the prison struggle, but our first formation (W.L. Nolen, William Christmas, Hugo Pincell, Howard Tole, James McClain, Jeffery Khatari Gauden, which had also included George) just to name a few, was the spark of the

can't because those of us who are true to the constitution, the New Code of Ethics and the legacy of our organization can't deny the truth or validity of his assessment. All I can do is concur with its very positive and significant message. Those efforts we initiated during the early '80s must be revisited. That is, if we are serious and sincere about our commitment to the revolution, our future role in the N.A.I.M. depends on what we do right now. It is the responsibility of each and everyone of us (as comrad Fela once said) to rise to this particular occasion with Guerrilla Love and do what is mandated by the demands of the New Afrikan Independence Movement. And I do have a message for all those perpetrators in general population (especially here at Pelican Bay) we are mindful of your actions, and the thirst of the Dragon has never been neglected to be watchful for accountability is only inevitable.

I would like to make a proposal to our New Afrikan Kollektive, especially to Brotha Prince Imari, Shaka Shakur and Sanyika. I am not that much much into revolutionary rhetoric, nor getting into that back and forth B.S. I am a New Afrikan Revolutionary Nationalist, a PAP (Politically active prisoner — a prisoner being persecuted for being actively involved in political agitation, organizing, armed retaliation). The struggle is my life, it's all I know. I don't claim any perfection. I'm just trying to make a difference. As Sanyika will attest to, absolutely

nothing is happening here in Pelican Bay. My keeps refuse to house any New Afrikan prisoners (NAP) in the pod with me. I'd recently engaged in a Hunger Strike, but due to a lack of kollektive participation I eventually became discouraged, bittered and frustrated and ended my protest after only 14 days and two confrontations with pig-guards but I must admit I do get a lot of my individual inspiration from you Brothas, Mumia and the Brothas as both Westville, Indiana's Maximum Control Complex and Lucasville. This inspiration has led me to the realization that there exist a vast pool of very talented and dedicated NAP community among us, the nucleus of a potentially explosive power base and mass movement — N.A.P.L.F. — New Afrikan Prisoners Liberation Front? What I am proposing that we form a united front that will consist of a diverse representation of New Afrikan Prisoners, Revolutionary Nationalist, communist, socialist, Muslim, all those who identify with the N.A.I.M. and our ultimate goal, the Independent Republik of New Afrika which inevitably encompasses our demand for reparation; we can write up a constitution that would lay out the rules of conduct, by-laws, oath, the responsibility of each member. We can elect a national council as well as local councils. Each local council would represent all the kamps in their jurisdiction (state). With such a power base, we would have no problems with promoting and/or implementing proposals such as the New Afrikan Community Parole Boards, Review, Reparations, as well as national strategy of FROLINAN — you cannot deny the potential(s) of such a formation. The possibility is too great to ignore! Rebuild! Reparations a must! ∞

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Black Prison Movement. We have also wacked and blasted more pig-guards than any formation behind the walls, and our ultimate contribution is Black August Memorial. Black August was formed by members of our party during the late '70s (San Quentin infamous Adjustment Center) to commemorate our fallen comrades; these are facts that no writer's pen or typewriter can take from us regardless of their attempts, so we have a lot to be proud of. We have a very glorious tradition and legacy, but if my comrades expect me to dispute or attack the validity of Sanyika's article, I

## Murder continued from pg 16

cians are obliged to follow suit or appear "soft on crime".

- These same politicians pour more and more money into prison and jail expansion.
- Architects, builders, and other prison contractors happily ply their trade. One need only attend a single American Correctional Association convention to appreciate how good this business can be.
- And, speaking of growing government payrolls, think of all the additional workers an ever-increasing prisoner population requires. Properly organized, they can be a terrific source of political campaign financing.

The prison system works very well for some. But it does not reduce crime for any of us. You had better read the fine print the

next time you decide to become a "yes man" to some lying politician conning you into voting for a bill, a law, which deprives you, your kids, and society as a whole of freedom, money and rights.

There are currently over 150,000 people imprisoned in California. The state predicts the number of prisoners will double to 285,000 — about the size of Riverside, California by the year 2000. That projection covers the longer sentences required by the "Three Strikes" life sentence law enacted early in 1994. The estimate does not include the impact of the approximately 240 other anti-crime bills approved in 1994.

I am perplexed that more prisons are seen as a solution. Even the most cursory studies of crime indicate a substantial recidivism. Prisons are universally recognized as training grounds for crime. If men are warehoused in overcrowded factories of violence and crime, the finished product is predictable.

The answers are there if we can look beyond our anger. Incarceration is not the answer unless it is tied to rehabilitation. I could give you numerous suggestions, somewhat biased but based on experience from within. If you seek accountability in the "crime war" then you must ensure that you are not creating the enemy with the prison system. Premeditated sanctioned murdering (executions) of prisoners will never solve the problem and proof is in the fact that the states which carry the death penalty are marked with the highest crime problems. Wake up, America, and see that you are being used, cheated, and robbed. If you don't, it will be your sons, daughters, mothers, and fathers who will be filling a cell within these new prisons or being murdered by the state in your name. ∞

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# North Coast Xpress responds to Prince Imari

Letter to the Editor:

In the Mar/Apr *PNS* Prince Imari Obadele continues to denounce *NCX* for "racist thought processes."

He is certainly correct to say that my letter was written in haste, but only as an overworked editor — not as a racist "blinded in anger."

He is correct to say that I had the audacity to give advice. I plead guilty. When I respond to submissions, I sometimes try to be helpful. I always try to be respectful. If I am correct, the writer improves his manuscript. If I am in error, the writer sets me straight. In Mr. Obadele's case, the writer went to the pages of *PNS*.

Let's put the offending parts of my letter on the table and be done with it. Here are relevant excerpts:

"Can we talk about strategy? . . . they [our readers] would find your demand for the entire \$22 billion [the crime bill appropriation] for Afro-centered services unfair. It omits other racial minorities just as affected by [the crime bill], oppression and injustice. It also omits consideration of class-based oppression in this country, which includes all poor and working poor, regardless of color.

I am in no way objecting to your focus, if that is the focus you have decided to pursue. We all have to stake out the territory we are willing to fight for, and none of us can dictate to others what that territory should be. But you have to be willing to fight alone if your battle excludes everyone else.

As a magazine editor, I have to keep the larger picture in mind. Furthermore, as an editor who corresponds with dozens of prisoners all over the country — Black, Latino, Native American, and Caucasian... I have to keep their oppression in mind too... I would be reluctant to play into the hands of those in power who want us divided, Black against Black, Chicano against Chicano, etc. as well as Black against White, Black against Chicano, Chicano against Black, White against all colors, etc.etc.

... I just hate to see you miss an opportunity to enlist more supporters in your struggle. What you are demanding for Black peo-

ple [reparations taken from crime bill money] would resonate in everyone's hearts and minds if you were asking it for all victims of oppression. That means Blacks and Chicanos most of all because they are filling the prisons and death rows out of all proportion to their percentage of the population.

Forgive me if I appear to be meddling in your strategy and objectives. I am, of course, but do so respectfully only for discussion and exchange of ideas — and maybe for persuasion. I hope you will respond accordingly.

I admit my letter is badly written. I apologize. In discussing strategy for *NCX* I also discuss *his* strategy for demanding the crime bill money. Mr. Obadele made it plain that is not to be tolerated. (Editors are wise to reject submissions without comment.) But nowhere do I declare opposition to reparations as such — only to *reparations tied to the crime bill*.

That being said, my letter does not establish *NCX* as "racist." Like any publication, *NCX* must stand or fall on its record. Are our "Voices from Prison" "racist"? Are our reports on the global economy, on foreign policy, on domestic policy, and — yes — on this country's racism, fascism, oppression, and repression "racist"? We do not "straddle the fence."

I still insist that it is harder to seduce the unconverted than to reach the converted. Just try it. It's excruciatingly frustrating. That doesn't mean that writing for comrades in the struggle or educating the young correspondingly is "unworthy and silly." Quite the opposite. *NCX* may well be whistling in the wind, but Mr. Obadele and others who write in *PNS* speak from the eye of the storm, engaged in vital work and productive analysis/discussion. Still, in exchanging views they can safely assume a mutual understanding about this country that we cannot assume in our audience. This understanding permits them an enviable freedom of expression.

It is when Mr. Obadele attacks our mission to connect prisoners with the working-class, that he raises a significant question. For the record, our magazine is distributed free in San Francisco, Berkeley, Oakland,

Sonoma County and points north. Who gets it? Principally the poor and working-class. Mr. Obadele sees the working-class as the racist White enemy. We see the working-class as potential recruits. We know they are not always White because we hear from them. But what if they are? Why shouldn't we shake up Whites? Mr. Obadele also sees us as the enemy. We see ourselves as a mixed group (old/young, male/female, white/minority, working-class/poor, physically fit/disabled) who work for dialogue and exchange of information with others to *unite for change*.

It is given that a revolution, peaceful or

otherwise, is inevitable — it is already happening! The media report on it daily. Some groups are working on the political front to educate and organize. Others are preparing for (or engaging in) armed struggle. Meanwhile the Right Wing is not idle. They grow stronger and stronger and draw the noose tighter. Their militias have been networking all along. Does it make sense, then, that we, on the other side, should attack *each other*? Shouldn't we work, in our respective arenas, to educate as widely as possible? And isn't there a place for mutual respect and cooperation?

Or do we stand too far apart to stand together?

"When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion" — Ethiopian proverb.

"An army of ants can overcome a poisonous reptile" — Japanese proverb.

Doret Kollerer, Senior Editor, *NCX*

## Re: the Prince Imari and NCX dispute

I would like to take editorial responsibility for the way in which the differences between Prince Imari and *North Coast Xpress* has developed in our pages. The initial editorial error was made when Prince Imari first criticized *NCX* in an article about the New Afrikan Community anti-drug initiatives in *PNS* #47. The proper approach would have been to ask Prince Imari to make his critique a general critique about North American (white) radicals lack of support for, and understanding of, New Afrikan demands for reparations, without specifically naming *NCX*. This would have allowed the political points to be made while maintaining a non-confrontational manner within the pages of *PNS*. As editor, I did not act in a timely manner in identifying the problem and then working to resolve it, while allowing for the political debate to continue. Prince Imari's article was printed with the explicit critique, and Doret Kollerer, editor of *NCX* was understandably upset.

The debate continued to develop through subsequent issues, and I was unable to figure out how to respond effectively to the situation. Though I was not "comfortable", still we did not want to stifle a critique of white radicals. And the fact that Prince Imari made so many good political points over and above his critical comments in his responses only made it harder to not print them. And as he explained, he is not a diplomat. He didn't feel the need to tone down his comments.

Prince Imari is a good friend, and I've learned a lot from him. He has been patient

as I've struggled to understand New Afrikan politics while at the same time working to develop my own political strength and ideas. Without negating his comments, and I agreed with his political points, I want to say that *North Coast Xpress* is breaking new ground as a local paper giving voice to prisoners and their issues. And much of this energy and initiative has come from Doret Kollerer. And regardless of whatever Prince Imari and Doret did to create this situation, I, acting as editor, didn't help it very much due to my own inactivity.

I would like to say that we prefer to keep whatever debates within *PNS* polite. though "politeness" is such a national characteristic of Anglo-Canadians that it can become a pathology. And it does become a problem if it is used to bury differences that need to be expressed in order for us to go forward. But *PNS* works on many political fault lines, along a very wide spectrum, one that varies along racial, national, sexual and political lines and endless combinations and permutations of them. We have a contradiction in needing to allow for the expression of differences and tensions, while at the same time, keeping things civil and going forward. We need to learn to work together against the common enemy long before we learn to like each other. For if we don't, all we can look forward to is a downward spiral into a conflict between the various peoples and nations of North America that will make what is currently going on in Yugoslavia seem pretty tame in comparison. ∞

Jim Campbell

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